

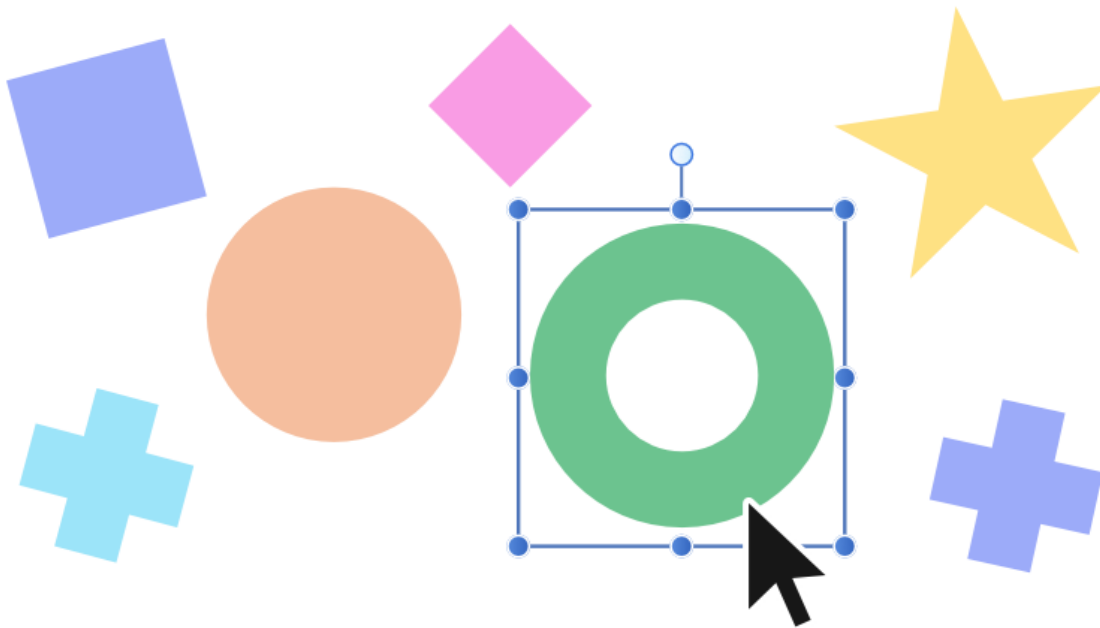
# Object Control

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# Selecting objects

Before you can move or modify vector objects, you must first select them.



 The fundamental methods of selecting objects described here are complemented by advanced **Select Same** and **Select Object** commands that [build selections based on object attributes](#), such as object type, fill color, or stroke width.

## Auto-select

By default, the **Auto-select** option is checked on the context toolbar. As expected, it automatically selects the object and its layer when you click to select it on the page. The option can be disabled if preferred.

You can select single or multiple objects using a variety of methods. If you already have an object selected, you can quickly select the next or previous object in the z-order (stack).

## Edit All Layers and Select All

The behavior of the Select All command depends on the **Edit All Layers** setting on the **Layers** panel:

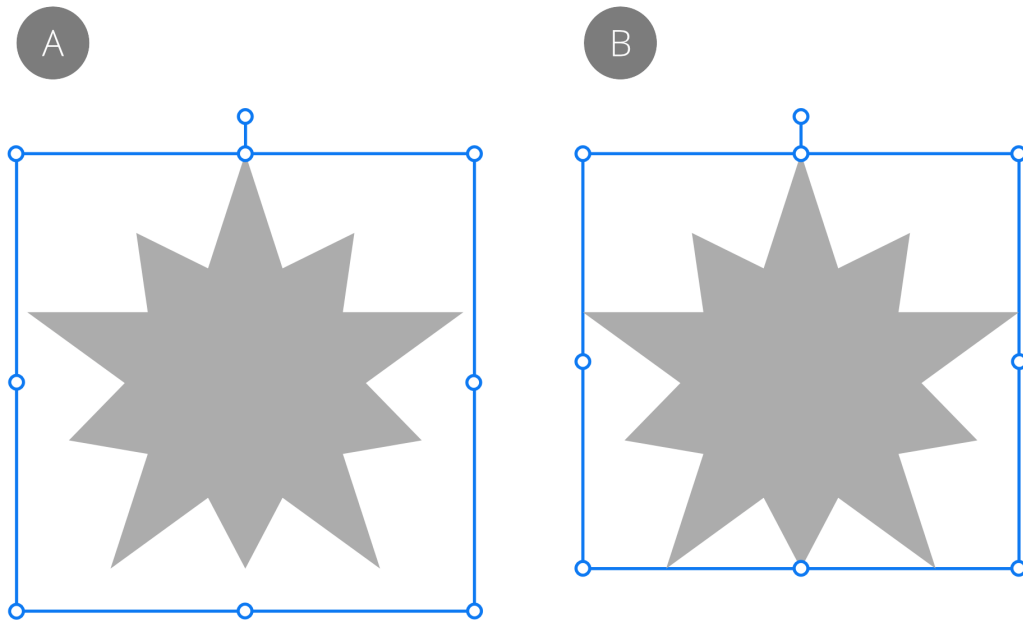
- When enabled, the command will select all objects across all layers and sub-layers.
- If this option is off, only objects on the current layer are selected. Objects within sub-layers are not selected.

 Edit All Layers is enabled by default but can be disabled at any time.

## Selection box types

For some shapes (e.g. star shapes), a *Base box* type will be established on shape creation to accommodate the range of different potential shape sizes when creating variants of that shape. However, you can temporarily swap to a 'tighter' bounding

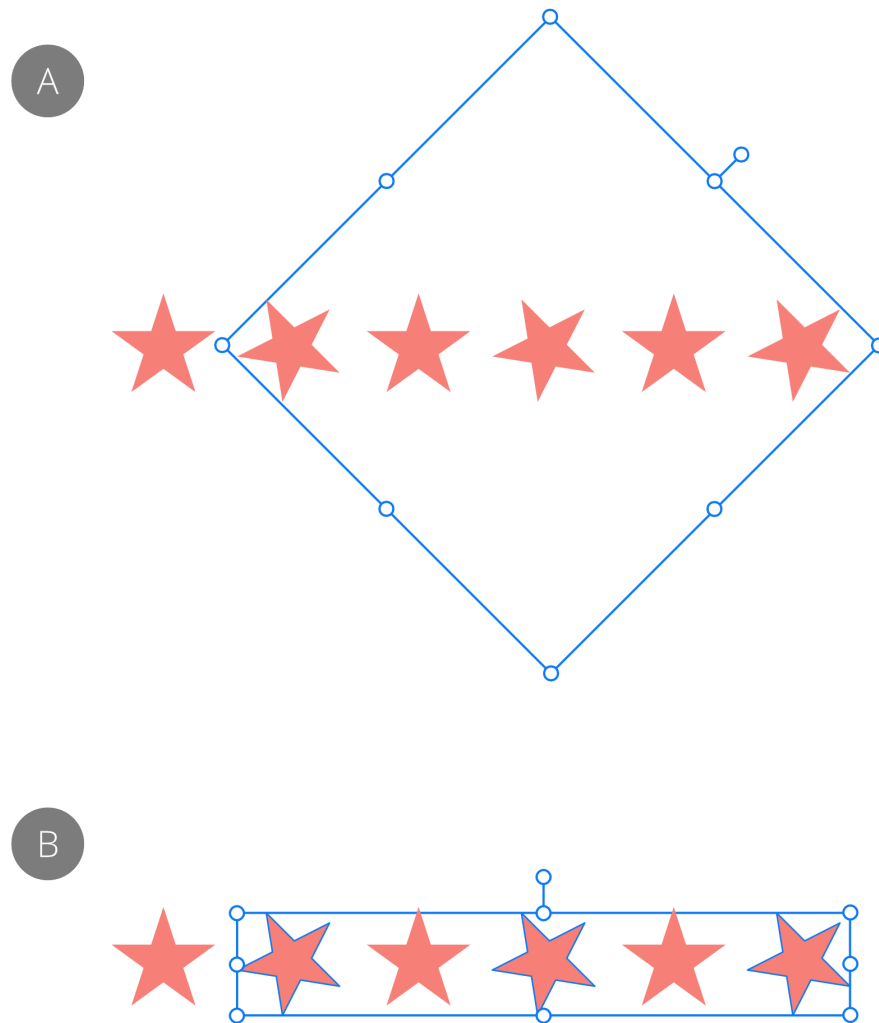
box called *Regular bounds* if needed. The latter is useful for accurately resizing a shape by its corner/edge handles to another object or page element.



Selection box types: Base box (A) and Regular bounds (B)

For rotated multiple selections of objects or pixel layers, you can temporarily reorient the selection's selection box to vertical using the same Regular bounds type. Otherwise, the selection box will stay transformed with the transformed items (using the Base Box type).





Rotated multiple selection before (A) and after (B) reorienting the selection box to Regular bounds

💡 Try targeting an independently rotated key object in a multiple selection using **Alt**-click. The overall Base Box will adopt the same rotation as that key object.

It's possible to permanently set the object's selection box to orient to the page's horizontal and vertical edges. The object is unaffected. When reselecting the items again, the selection box will remain unrotated.

If you're using axonometric grids, the additional selection box type *Planar bounds*, which matches the current grid, can also be swapped to and be made permanent if needed.

#### ▼ To toggle Edit All Layers:

- On the **Layers** panel, click **Edit All Layers**.

#### ▼ To select an object:

Do one of the following:

- With the **Move Tool** selected, click an object or group on the page to select it.
- On the **Layers** panel, click an object entry.

#### ▼ To select multiple objects:

Do one of the following:

- With the **Move Tool** selected, **Shift**-click each object on the page in turn to select them.
- With the **Move Tool** selected, drag to draw a marquee around the object(s).\*

#### ▼ To select all objects in a layer:

- From the **Select** menu, choose **Select All on Current Layer**.

#### ▼ To select all objects on a page:

- On the **Select** menu, select **Select All**.

#### ▼ To select other objects in a selected object's z-order:

Do one of the following:

- With the object selected, on the **Select** menu, choose:
  - **Select Next / Select Previous**—selects an object adjacent to the selected object in z-order sequence, within the same layer, group or entire layer stack. The option will cycle selection from bottom to top and vice versa.
  - **Select Top / Select Bottom**—as above but selection is made of the top or bottom object in the layer, group or entire layer stack in z-order.
  - **Select Parent**—selects the parent clipping object, layer or group in which the selected object is placed.
- **Right**-click the object, then choose the same options as above from the pop-up menu.

#### ▼ To control automatic selection behavior:

- On the Move Tool's context toolbar, choose one of the following options. These let you optionally select only objects or groups on the page, or just from the Layers panel (on-page selection is prevented).
  - **Default**—objects and groups can be selected on the page or Layers panel.
  - **Objects**—only objects can be selected on the page, while grouped items will be selected as if ungrouped; layers, groups and objects can be selected from the Layers panel.
  - **Groups**—only groups can be selected on the page; layers, groups and objects can be selected from the Layers panel.

#### ▼ To cycle between selection box types:

- On the **Select** Menu, choose **Cycle Selection Box**.

#### ▼ To set the selection box permanently:

1. Cycle to the selection box you want using **Cycle Selection Box** on the **Select** Menu.
2. On the same menu, choose **Set Selection Box**.

 For example, this includes objects such as shapes that have been rotated by 90, 180 or -90°.

### Modifier keys

When using the **Move Tool**, the following modifier keys can be used to aid layer selection:

- With the **Auto-select** option disabled:
  - **Ctrl**-click an object on the page to temporarily override the option and enable the selection.
- With the **Auto-select** option enabled:
  - On the **Layers** panel, holding the **Shift** key and clicking selects multiple objects. The same is achieved by clicking objects on the page while holding the key.
  - Holding the **⌘+Shift** keys while clicking on multiple objects on the page in turn, selects them.

- **Alt** key-click a layer in the panel temporarily disables the whole composition preview leaving only the one (clicked on) selected—helpful in confirming selection of layers in complex compositions.
- The **.** key toggles a shape's bounding box between a Base box and a Regular bounds box. Alternatively, use **Cycle Selection Box** on the **Select** Menu. To permanently use a Regular bounds box on the object, use **Ctrl+.**



You can **Lock/Unlock** selected objects from the **Layers** panel or **Layer** menu.

### ▼ To find an object in the Layers panel manually:

Do one of the following:

- **Right-click** the layer content on the page and select **Find in Layers Panel**.
- From the **Layer** menu, select **Find in Layers Panel**.
- On your keyboard, press **Ctrl+K**.



## Settings

Related behaviors can be adjusted from the app's settings:

- **General>Prefer to keep selection after delete**
- **\*Tools>Select object when intersects with selection marquee**

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## SEE ALSO:

[Selecting objects by attribute](#)

[Move Tool](#)

[Grouping objects](#)

[Layers panel](#)

[Selecting and editing layers](#)

[Settings](#)

# Selecting objects by attribute

The **Layers** panel and the **Select** menu provide ways to select objects by their type or a shared attribute, adding or removing matching objects to or from the current selection.

 These selection methods are complementary to [traditional methods of selecting objects](#).

## Select Same Tag Color and Select Same Name

From the **Layers** panel, you can select all layers that share a name or an assigned tag color.

## Select Same and Select Object

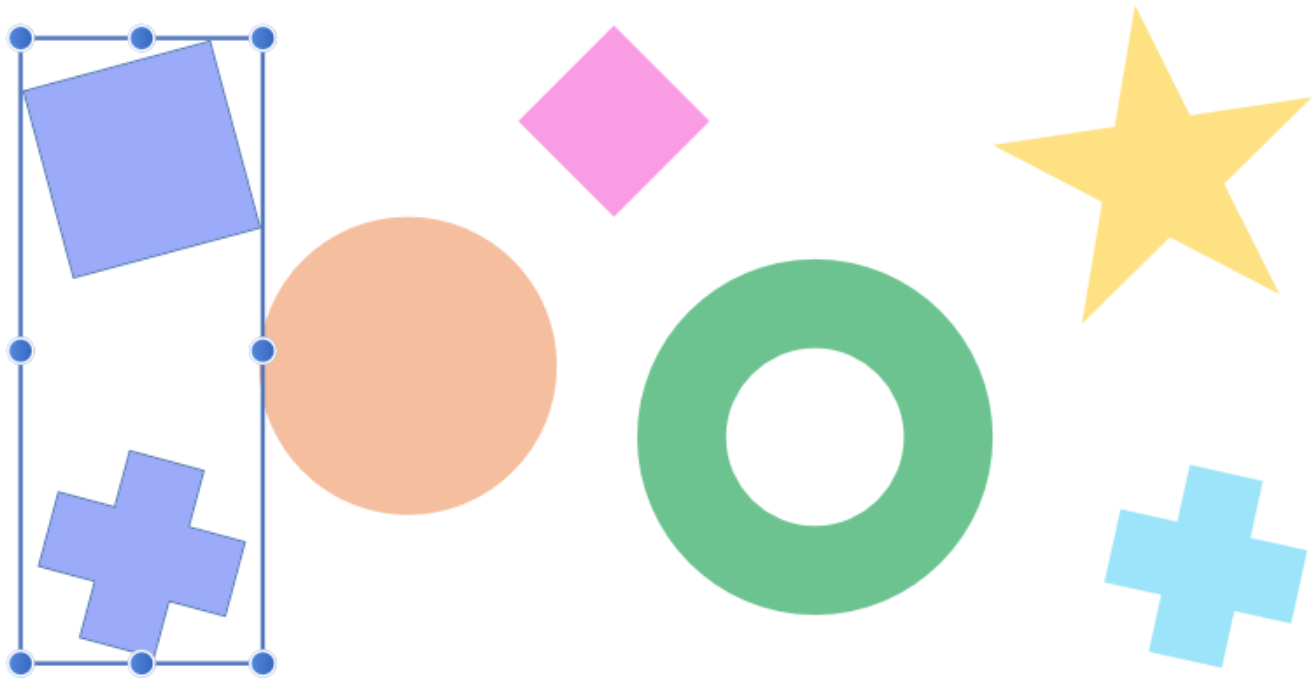
These powerful selection methods allow you to quickly make bulk changes to your design all at once, e.g. to convert objects that share a non-global color to use a global one.

Both commands are available from the **Select** menu. Each offers a range of options in its submenu.

The **Select Same** command selects all objects in your document that match an attribute on your currently selected object.

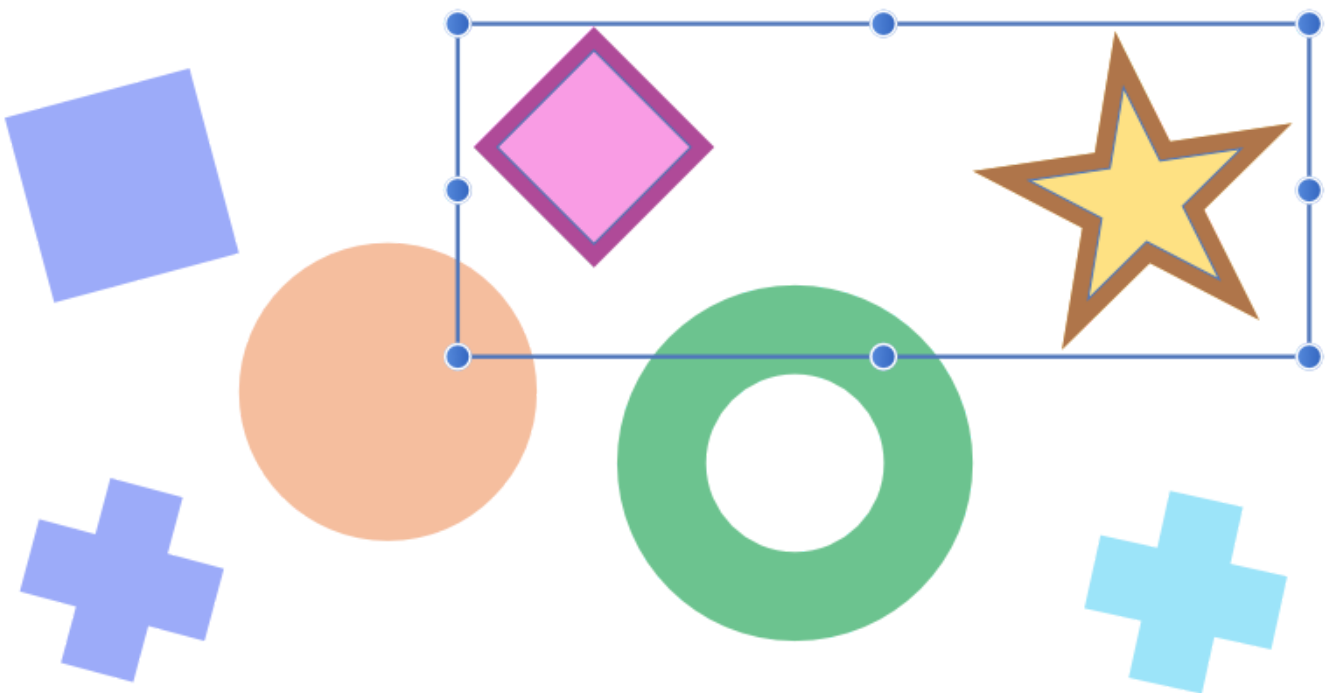
Select Same matches objects with the same Fill Color, Stroke Color, Fill & Stroke Color, Stroke Weight, Transparency, Blend Mode, Shape, Width, Height, Rotation, Name, or Tag Color.

Select Same can also match objects whose Width, Height, or Stroke Weight is less than, less than or equal, greater than, or greater than or equal to that of the currently selected object.



*Selecting the same fill color across objects.*

The **Select Object** command selects all objects of a matching type within your document. For example, you can select all groups, symbols, art text, artboards, pixel layers, unfilled objects, transparent objects, and any objects which do/don't have a stroke, etc.



*Selecting objects with strokes applied.*

Both commands also work well in conjunction with each other, allowing you to first group all layers of each fill color (using Select Same) and then select all of the grouped layers (using Select Object), for example, effectively

organizing the layers in your image.

 To specify whether Select Object or Select Same will include or exclude hidden objects in its resultant selections, select or deselect **Select Hidden Objects** from the corresponding command's submenu.

## Edit All Layers and Select Same/Select Object

**Edit All Layers** (on the **Layers** panel) determines the scope of Select Same and Select Object.

When enabled, the commands select matching objects across all artboards in your document. When disabled, they select matching objects only on the current artboard.

### ▼ To select all layers sharing the same name:

- With a layer selected on the **Layers** panel, **Right-click** it and choose **Select Same Name** from the pop-up menu.

### ▼ To select all layers sharing a tag color:

- With a layer selected on the **Layers** panel, **Right-click** it and choose **Select Same Tag Color** from the pop-up menu.

### ▼ To select all objects sharing a chosen attribute with the currently selected object:

- With an object selected, from the **Select** menu, choose **Select Same** and select an attribute from the menu.

### ▼ To select all objects of a certain type:

- From the **Select** menu, choose **Select Object** and select an object type from the menu.



## Modifier keys

When using the Select Object command, the following modifier keys can be used to aid object selection:

- The **Shift** key adds matching objects to the current selection.
- The **Ctrl** key removes matching objects from the current selection.
- The **Shift+Alt** key combination selects matching objects only from within the current selection, i.e. non-matching objects are removed from the current selection.

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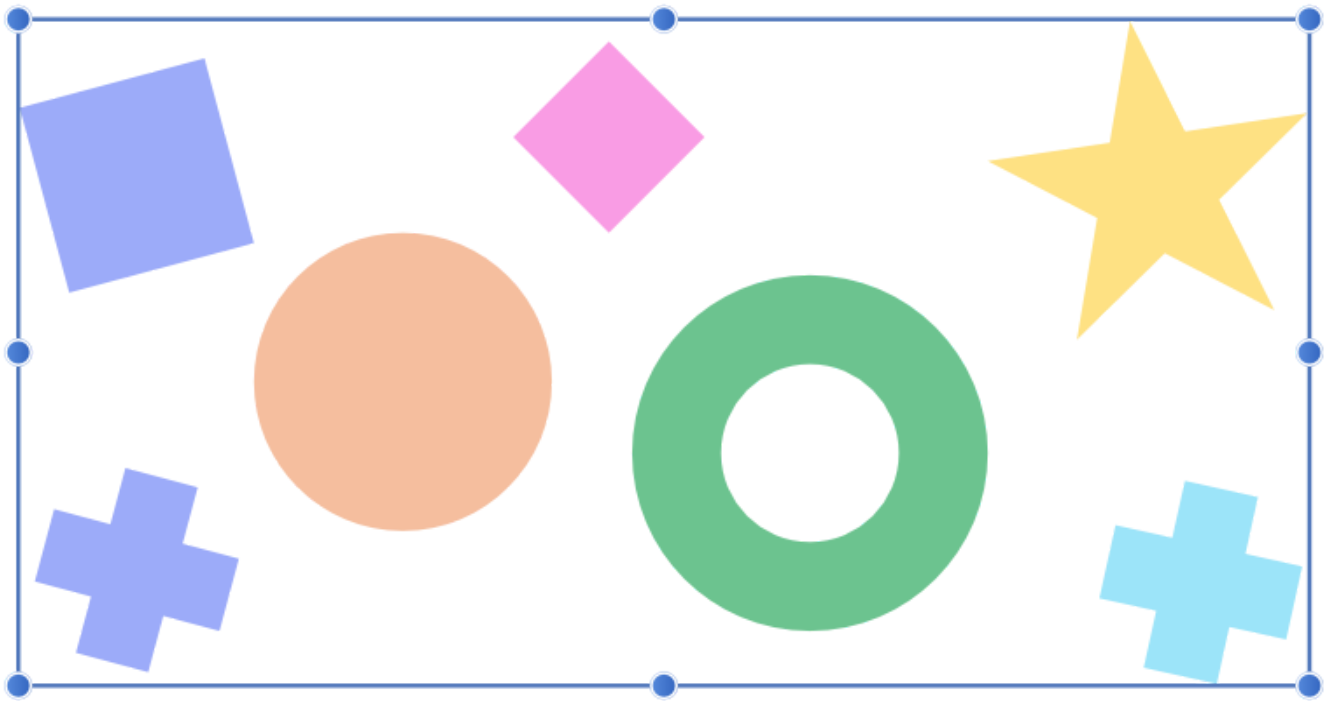
## SEE ALSO:

[Move Tool](#)

[Selecting objects](#)

# Grouping objects

Objects can be grouped together to assist with design composition. One or more groups can also belong to a 'parent' group.



Grouped objects remain together so they can be easily selected, moved, copied, and edited as if they are a single object.

Groups, and nested groups, can be broken apart at a later date into their separate components or objects. Ungrouping can be activated on individual groups, or across multiple or nested groups using a single command.

Furthermore, a group can be converted to layer at a later date (if needed) to assist with design organization.

 Grouped objects display as nested Group layers on the **Layers** panel.

 To select nested content directly from the document view, select the **Move Tool**, then hold the Ctrl key and right-click an object in the view. From the contextual menu that appears, select any content contained in the same group as (or deeper than) the object you clicked.

## ▼ To create a group:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  - On the context toolbar, click **Group**.

- From the **Layer** menu, select **Group**.

### ▼ To name a group:

1. Do one of the following:
  - On the **Layers** panel, double-click the existing group.
  - With the group selected, from the **Layer** menu, select **Rename Layer**.
2. Type a new name.
3. Press **Return**.

You can enable **Ask for name when creating Layers and Groups** setting to be prompted to name them upon creation. This is found in the **Settings (or Preferences)>User Interface** section.

### ▼ To ungroup objects:

1. Select the group.
2. Do one of the following:
  - On the context toolbar, click **Ungroup**.
  - From the **Layer** menu, select **Ungroup**.

 You can expand or collapse all nested layers in a group by pressing the **Alt** key and clicking the group layer's arrow.

### ▼ To release a grouped object:

1. Select the object you wish to move out of the group.
2. Right click on the object in the **Layers** panel, and from the menu, choose **Release**.

### ▼ To ungroup all grouped objects:

1. Select grouped objects.
2. From the **Layer** menu, select **Ungroup All**.

 All groups and nested groups are ungrouped, leaving all previously grouped objects as separate, single objects.

### ▼ To select objects (or groups) in a group:

- Double-click on the object. If the object itself is in a group, the group will be selected first—double-clicking again will select the object.

### ▼ To promote a group to a layer:

- From the **Layer** menu, select **Promote Group to Layer**.



# Duplicating objects

Increase your efficiency by duplicating objects or groups.

Affinity lets you make copies of your original object using several methods.

- Creating a single duplicate using a command.
- Creating many offset duplicates by using Move data entry.
- Creating many offset duplicates by using power duplicate.

## ▼ To duplicate:

Do one of the following:

- On the page, drag a selected object with the **Ctrl** key pressed. While dragging, release the key to move the object instead, or press the key while moving to duplicate rather than move.
- On the **Layers** panel, **Right**-click a layer, group or object and select **Duplicate**.
- On the **Layers** panel, press the **Alt** key down and drag the layer you would like to duplicate into its position.
- With an object selected, select **Edit>Duplicate**.

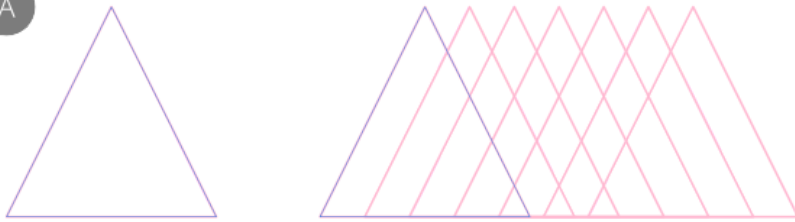
## Duplicate using Move data entry

As well as moving, rotating and sizing an individual object precisely, Move data entry lets you create any number of copies of an object in one operation which, when combined with move, rotate and scale operations, leads to some striking object transformations.

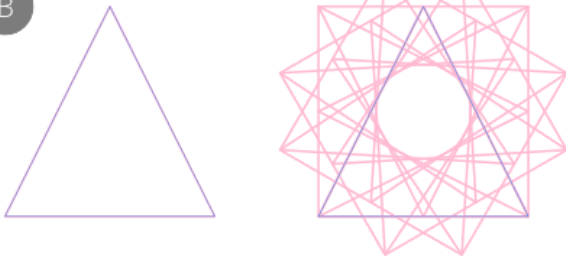
Move data entry has the following characteristics:

- You can duplicate curves and text as well as shapes
- It is controlled via a dialog
- Your chosen transformation is previewed on the page
- You can edit the properties of the object being transformed (affecting its its previewed duplicates) as well as its transform origin while the dialog remains open
- The duplicate(s) can be placed in front of or behind the original object
- The previous settings can optionally be used
- Scaling is cumulative, e.g. 80% scaling is applied to each duplicate in turn

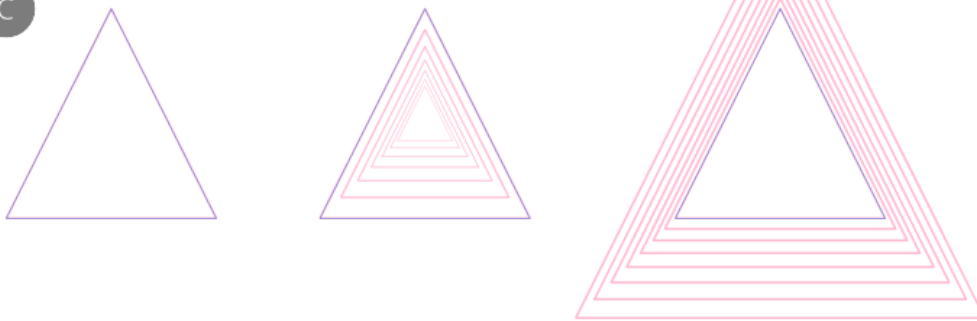
A



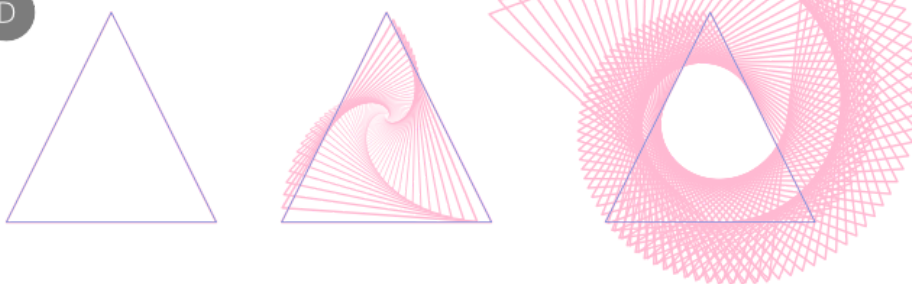
B



C

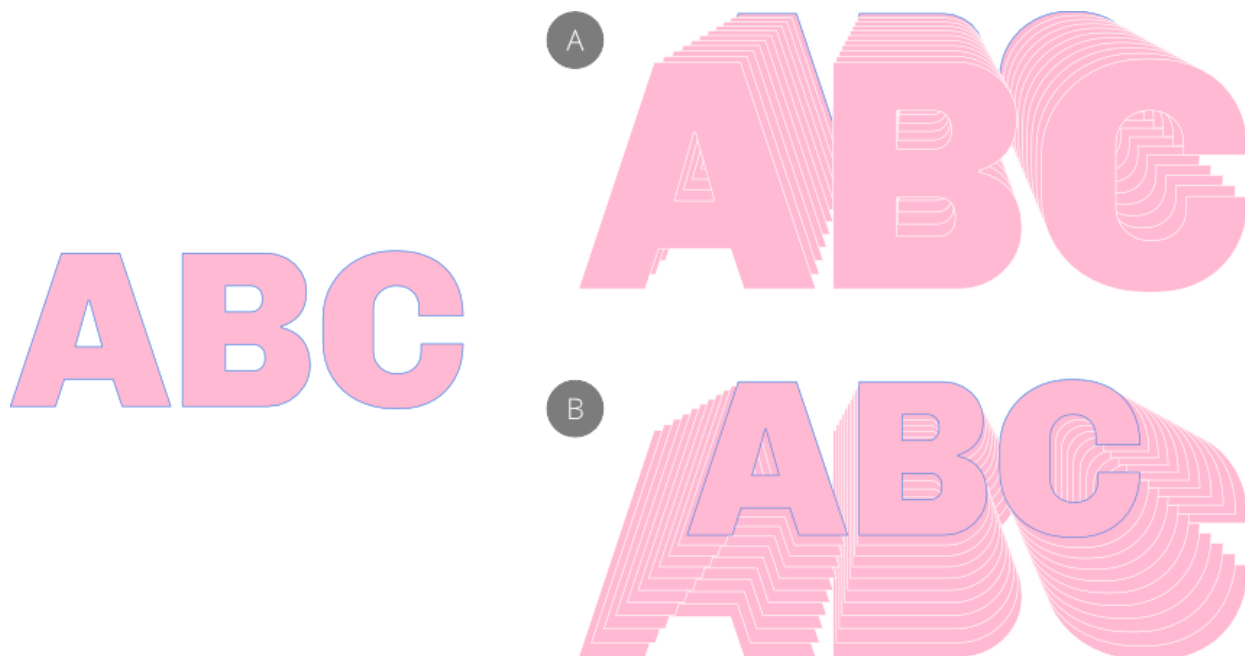


D



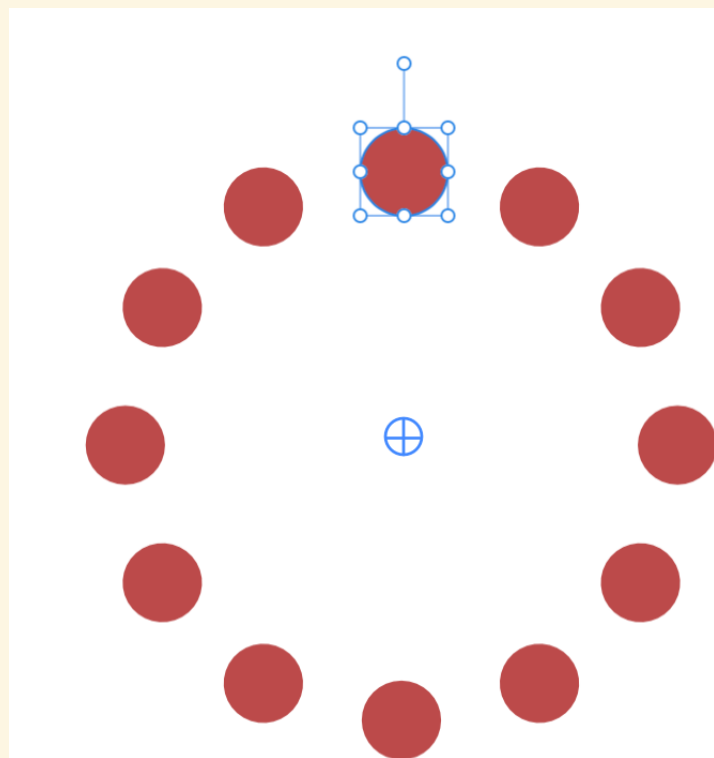
- (A) Linear offset (Horizontal: 6mm; Number of copies: 6),  
 (B) Rotating (Rotation: 30°; Number of copies: 12),  
 (C) Scaling (Scale: 80% and 110%; Number of copies: 6),  
 (D) Rotating and Scaling (Rotation: -4°; Scale: 93% and 101%, Number of copies: 50)

You can achieve very different duplication results if you experiment with the **Insertion mode** option on the dialog.



Effects of Insertion mode when set to add duplicates in front of (A) or behind (B) the original item

💡 Try repositioning the object's transform origin on the page before using Move data entry—this lets you rotate duplicated objects around the origin to create ringed designs.



Move / Duplicate

☒ Previous Settings

Horizontal: 0 mm

Vertical: 0 mm

Distance: 0 mm

Angle: 0 °

Rotation: 30 °

Scale: 100 %

☒ Duplicate

Number of copies: 11

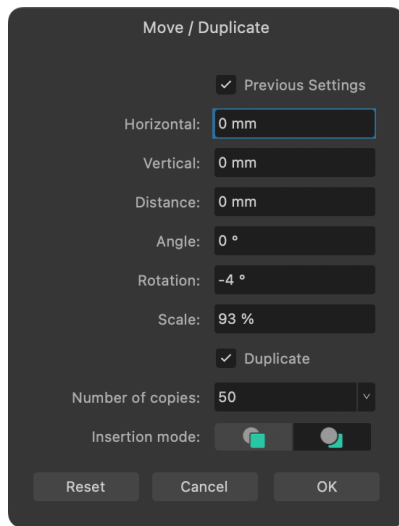
Insertion mode:

☒
☐

Reset
Cancel
OK

#### ▼ To duplicate (by Move data entry):

1. With the **Move Tool** active, select one or more objects or groups.
2. Press the **Return** key to display a **Move / Duplicate** dialog.



Enter new settings that will offset the duplicate(s) from its original position, with optional **Angle**, **Rotation** and **Scale** settings. The **Distance** setting is the measurement between duplicate object midpoints.

3. Check **Duplicate** and set the **Number of copies** you want.
4. (Optional) Choose an **Insertion mode** to add duplicate objects either in front of (  **Insert new items in front**) or behind (  **Insert new items behind**) the original object.
5. Click **OK**.

Click **Reset** to clear previously applied settings and remove the duplicates.

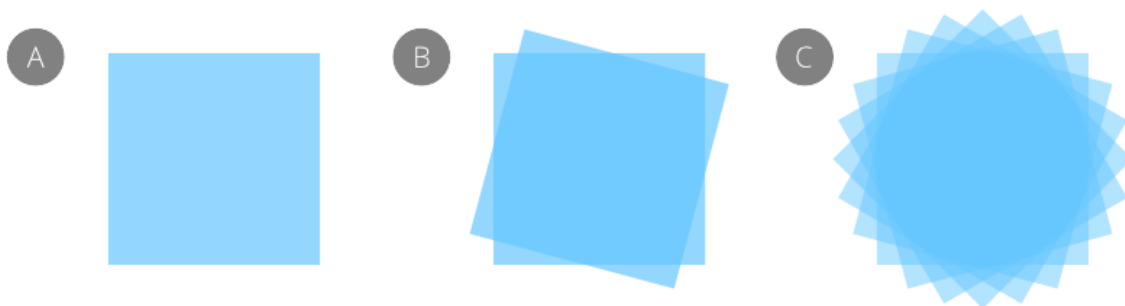
Pressing the **Esc** key will cancel the operation; the entered settings will still be remembered.

 If you swap to another tool while the dialog is open, the dialog and any object previews will disappear.

## Power duplicate

If you duplicate an object and then transform the duplicate, you can immediately duplicate this transformed object. If you do, the newly created object will adopt the transform of the duplicate and will be also transformed again using the same settings. In other words, the transform is applied accumulatively to subsequent duplicates.

 Once duplicated, you can modify the duplicate to create design variations.



(A) original object, (B) original object duplicated and rotated by 15°, (C) transformed duplicate duplicated numerous times.

### ▼ To power duplicate:

1. Select one or more objects or groups.
2. From the **Edit** menu, select **Duplicate**.
3. Move the duplicated object or group.

4. From the **Edit** menu, select **Duplicate**.

A duplicate is created and the transform is automatically applied to the duplicate.

5. Repeat step 4 to create more duplicates with the transform accumulatively applied.

---

### SEE ALSO:

[Arrange/manage layers](#)

[Keyboard shortcuts for object control](#)

# Joining objects with Booleans

Objects can be joined together to create an unlimited variety of shapes using Boolean operations. Joining operations are permanent.

## Joining operations

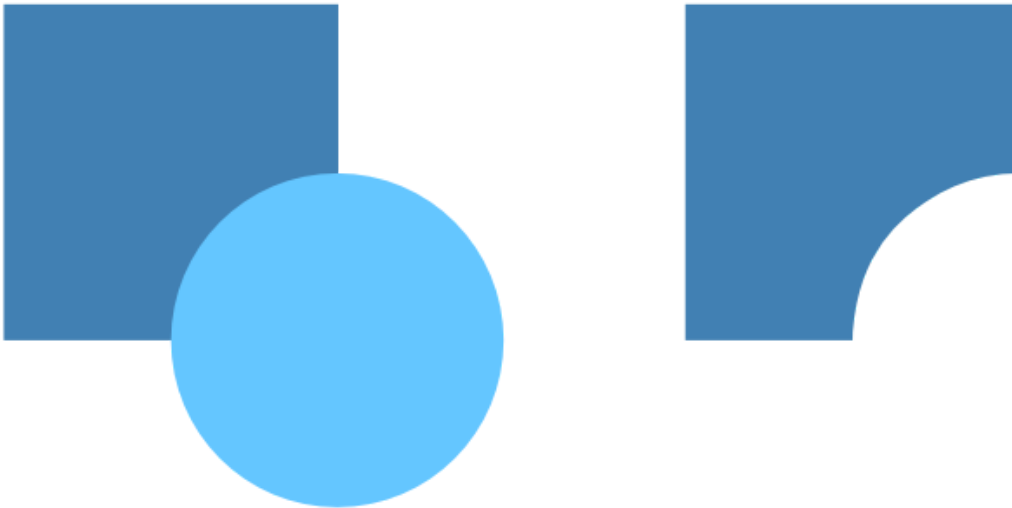
There are various operations available (illustrated as before and after):

**Add**—creates a new object from the sum of the selected objects; the color of the lowest object is used.

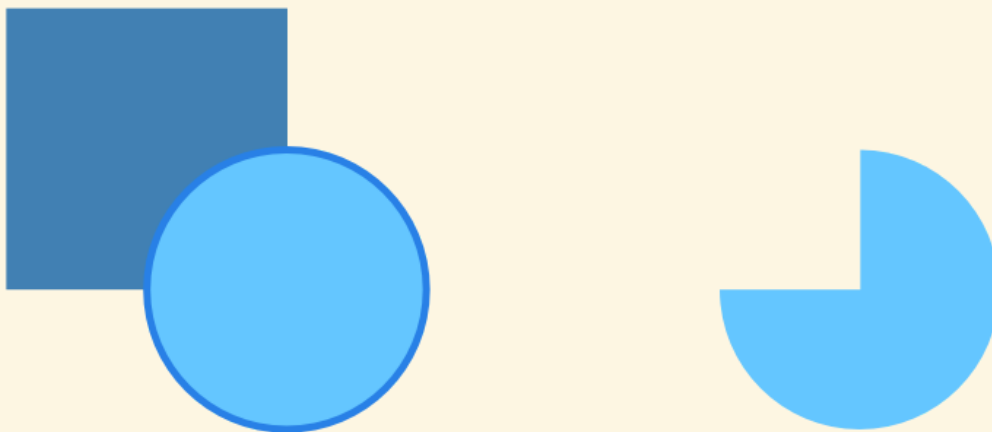


 The **Add** operation can be applied to a single shape, in which case interior overlaps are removed and the resulting shape is the outline of the original shape.

**Subtract**—removes overlapped areas of the lowest object. All other selected objects are discarded.

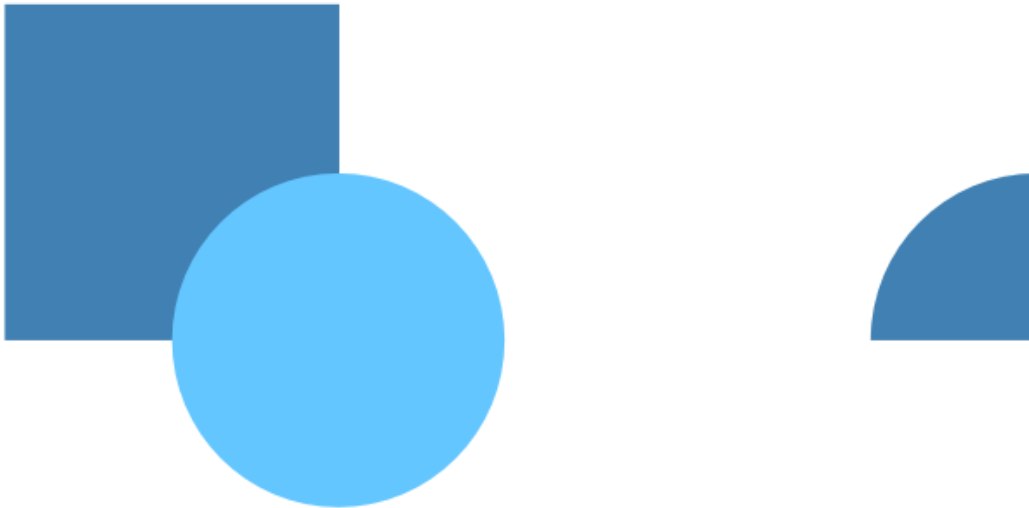


💡 Alternatively, with objects selected, press the **Alt** key and click a 'key' object to subtract from, instead of the lowest object. The key object shows with a strong outline colored blue by default or with the containing layer's layer color.



✎ **Layer>Geometry>Fill holes** will remove any holes within one or more selected shapes, filling it with the surrounding shape's fill.

**Intersect**—creates a new object from the overlapping areas common to all selected objects.



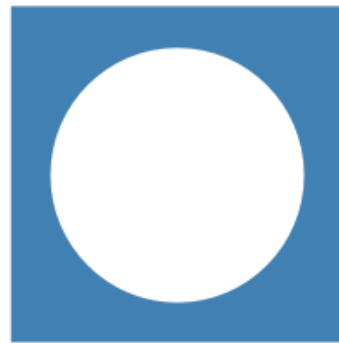
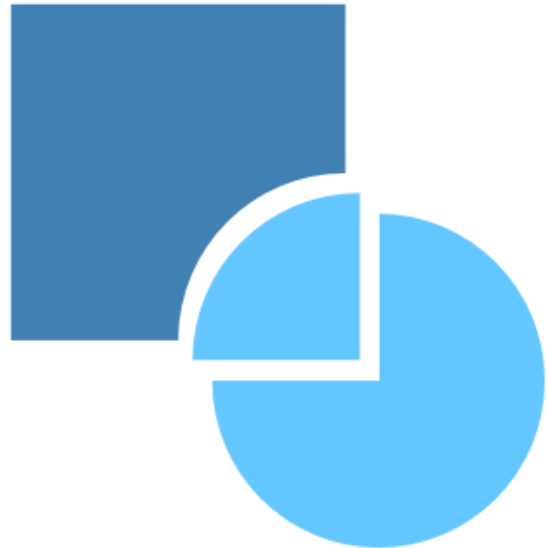
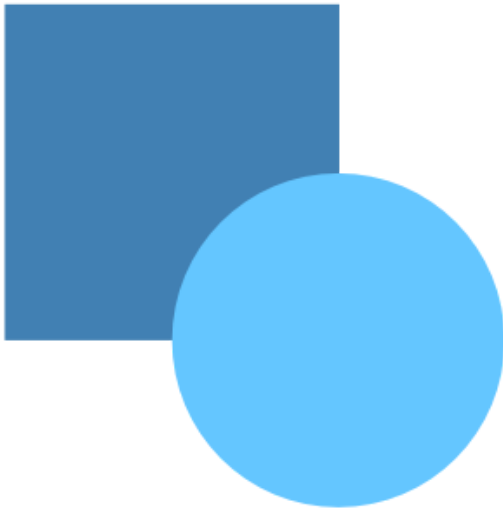
 For more than two objects, all objects must intersect each other.

**Xor**—merges selected objects into a composite object with transparent area where filled regions overlap.



**Divide**—splits object areas into separate objects; the object from the intersecting area retains the color of the upper object. The operation will be performed inside groups.





*Cut away of a fully overlapping object from the object below (the residual object can be deleted).*



*Object being split by one or more straight lines or curves.*

✎ By default, the **Divide** operation will trim off any residual straight lines or curves extending beyond the shape's outline, plus any lines/curves left over between object fragments.

With the **Alt** key pressed during the operation, you can still retain the original curve(s) or line(s) instead (without trimming) but it will be split at every intersecting point.

### ▼ To implement join operations:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  - On the Toolbar, select **Add**, **Subtract**, **Intersect**, **Xor** or **Divide**.
  - From the **Layer** menu's **Geometry** submenu, select an operations command.

💡 Holding down the **Alt** key when selecting **Add**, **Subtract**, **Intersect** or **Xor** will [create a non-destructive compound](#).

## SEE ALSO:

[Draw and edit shapes](#)

[Creating compounds](#)

[Joining objects by shape building](#)

# Creating compounds

Compounds provide a flexible approach to creating a variety of shapes from separate objects using Boolean operations.

Unlike [joining objects](#), creating a Compound is a non-destructive process. This means a Compound can be added to, or broken apart, at any time. Objects within the Compound can also be removed and modified without restriction, if and when desired.

Objects within a Compound interact with each other depending on their individual compound mode. This mode can be changed at any time; each mode can be previewed in realtime on selection.

 By default, a Compound adopts the properties of the lowest object when the Compound is created. However, once a Compound is in place its individual properties can be modified, as with any object.

## Compound modes

There are various operations available (illustrated as before and after):

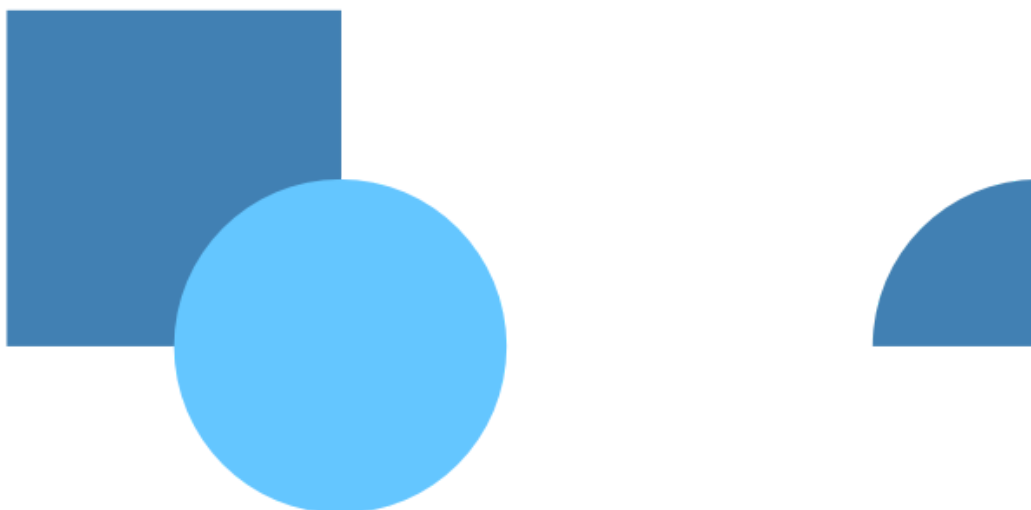
**Add**—expands Compound by adding the object's area to all objects below; the color of the lowest object is used. This is the default mode.



**Subtract**—reduces Compound by removing overlapped areas of the lowest object. All other selected objects are discarded.



**Intersect**—modifies Compound by only showing overlapping areas of selected object and objects below.



 For more than two objects, all objects must intersect each other.

**Xor**—modifies Compound by creating a composite shape, with transparent areas where object overlaps with objects below.



▼     **To create a Compound:**

1. Select multiple objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  - From the **Layer** menu, select **Create Compound**. The compound mode of each object is set to **Add**.
  - Hold down the **Alt** key. On the Toolbar, select **Add**, **Subtract**, **Intersect** or **Xor**.

▼ **To change the compound mode of individual objects:**

1. On the **Layers** panel, click the object's compound mode icon.
2. Select a compound mode from the pop-up menu.

▼ **To add an object to a Compound:**

- On the **Layers** panel, drag the object on top of the compound object.

The object is included in the Compound using the default Add mode.

▼ **To remove an object from a Compound:**

- On the **Layers** panel, drag the object from inside the compound object to a layer.

### ▼ To release (break up) a Compound:

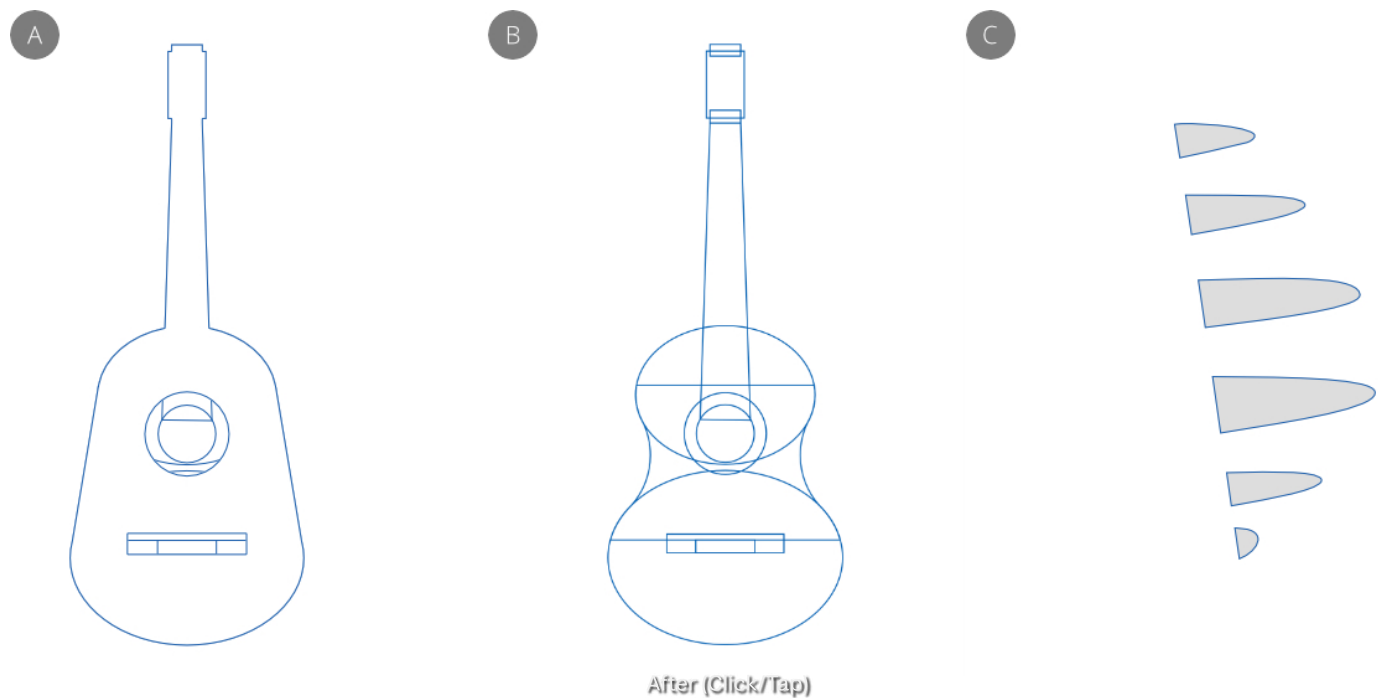
1. Select the Compound.
  2. From the **Layer** menu, select **Release Compound**.
- 

### SEE ALSO:

[Joining objects with Booleans](#)

# Adding objects by shape building

Shape building adds separate shapes together to make more complex shape designs using the **Shape Builder Tool**. It can also be used to delete shape areas.



(A) Adding shapes, (B) deleting unwanted areas, (C) deleting areas on an open filled curve.

## About shape building

Shape building lets you add geometric and closed shapes into a single, identifiable real-world shape, e.g. a guitar, steam train silhouette, celtic knot, etc. You can also delete unwanted areas that result from overlapped shapes for interesting cutout effects. Open filled and unfilled curves can also have concave or enclosed areas deleted.

## About the Shape Builder Tool

The tool works by making an in-tool selection of 'candidate' shape areas for shape building, then either adding the selected areas together to form a new shape or removing selected areas.

Objects need to be previously selected prior to shape building. Typically, drag a marquee over the shapes you want to work with. You can then choose which objects will be shape building candidates by dragging across shape areas in different ways, i.e. using a freehand line, straight line or selection marquee.

The default tool behavior is to build up a selection of candidate shape areas, then once you're happy with your selection you can add or delete them in a final operation. This offers maximum flexibility and experimentation while shape building in advance of committing to your changes. Alternatively, you can take an 'as-you-go' approach to shape building where different **Action** modes will add, delete or create areas immediately using the different drag methods mentioned previously.

### ▼ To select objects for shapebuilding:

1. Select the **Shape Builder Tool**.
2. Drag a marquee over the objects you want to include.

 You're not actually performing shape building at this point—just including the objects you want to work on.

**To add, delete or create areas:**

1. Ensure the **Shape Builder Tool** is active and objects are selected.
2. On the context toolbar, choose a **Drag method**, then drag across shape areas to include them as candidates for shape building—you can use a freehand or straight line drawn between adjacent areas, or a marquee drawn over the selected shapes. A hover-over strong outline indicates a targeted area ready for candidate selection. Once selected, linear hatching indicates the shape area is a candidate.
3. (Optional) On the context toolbar, choose a **Clean up** method for automatically removing unwanted internal or connected curves, as well as all unused geometry.
4. When you're happy with your chosen shape areas, click one of three **Action** options on the context toolbar:
  - Creates a new shape from selected areas; the original affected objects are removed. Alternatively, press the **Return** key.
  - Deletes selected shape areas. Alternatively, press the **Backspace** key.
  - Creates a new shape from selected areas while retaining the original selected objects.

Use +, - and \* keys on your numeric keypad for the above actions, respectively.

To deselect any selected areas, press the **Esc** key.

**To add, delete or create areas as-you-go:**

1. Ensure the **Shape Builder Tool** is active and objects are selected.
2. On the context toolbar, enable one of the **Action** options.
3. Choose a **Drag method** to shape build with.
4. Drag from a starting area to other areas and release to add, delete or create immediately.

When adding areas, the object style (fill/stroke color, layer effects and stroke properties) from the heavily outlined area you drag from (or marquee select from) is carried over by default; dragging from outside the area will pick up the currently set default stroke/fill instead. You can disable this by unchecking **Use style from first selected area** on the tool's context toolbar. Instead, the currently set default stroke/fill will be applied to the newly created area.

**Modifier keys**

The following modifier keys can be used:

- To instantly delete selected areas (instead of adding together) or manually remove unwanted curves while dragging, press the **Alt** key as you drag using any **Drag method**.
- The **Ctrl** key clears the selected areas when clicked and makes a new layer selection of the clicked object.
- **Shift Return** creates a new shape from selected areas.

**SEE ALSO:**

[Selecting objects](#)

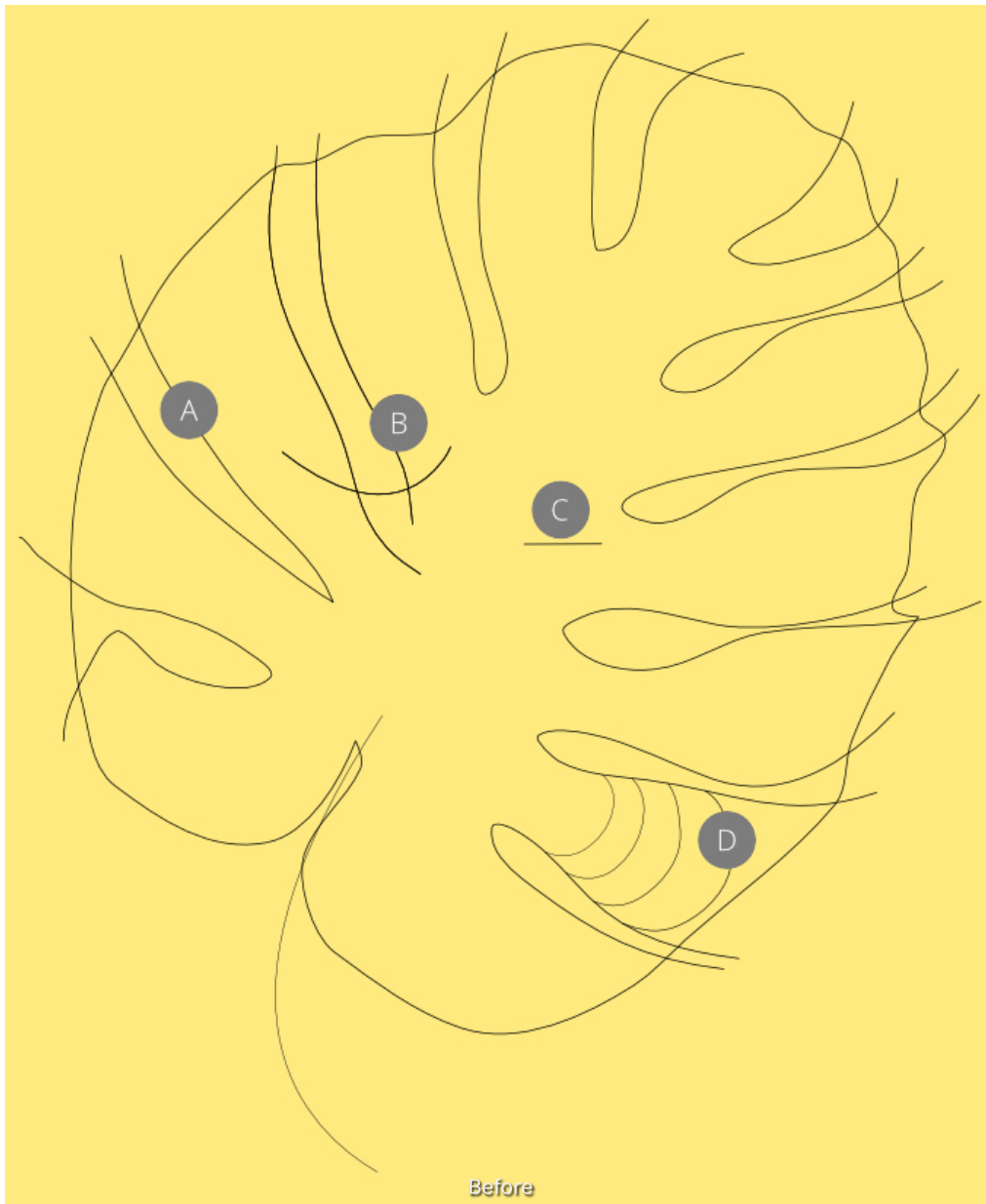
[Shape Builder Tool](#)

[Keyboard shortcuts for operations](#)



# Cutting objects

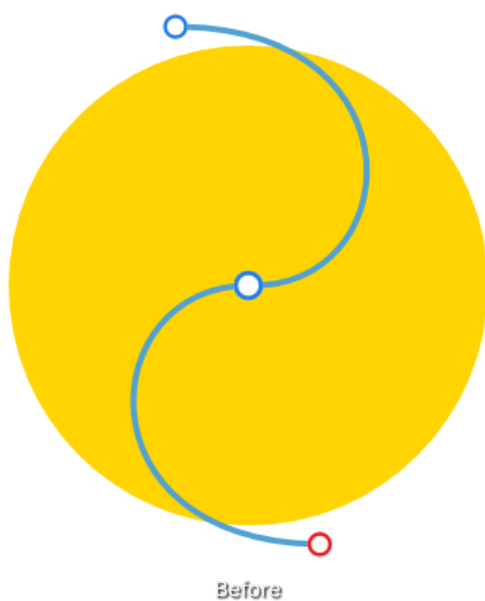
Objects can be easily cut up in various ways using the Knife Tool or a Divide Boolean operation.



*Knife Tool: (A) Single-stroke cut and delete, (B) Intersecting multi-stroke cut and delete, (C) Single-stroke cut and separate, (D) Multi-stroke cut and recolor of fragments.*



Knife Tool: (A) Cutting a single curve with two one-click scissor cuts and (B) cutting multiple straight lines simultaneously using a single-stroke cut. Unwanted curve fragment(s) are subsequently deleted in both.



Divide Boolean operation: splitting an object with a Bézier curve (drawn with the Pen Tool).

## About cutting

Two techniques are possible using different features:

- **Knife Tool**—cuts objects quickly in one operation using a freeform or straight line drawn with the Knife Tool. Key features include:
  - Stroke stabilization: smoothing of the knife stroke.
  - Autoclosing of open curves to cut out holes from objects.
  - Scissor cuts: to break open curves at a target node or anywhere on a curve segment or to break open closed shapes too.
- **Divide**—takes advantage of the power of the Pen Tool to create a 'cutting' Bézier curve (editable with the Node Tool) to cut from in advance of dividing up into object fragments. This approach lets you fine-tune the cutting line before cutting.

For either technique, instead of repositioning, reshaping or deleting specific fragments after cutting, you can simply recolor each fragment independently.

Cutting works irrespective of layers. You can cut across any selection of objects as long as the selection is in place.

## About partial cutting

Partially cutting into an object will create a split, i.e. a 'closed up' cut with each side of the cut touching. The appearance is of a single stroke but editing either curve (by moving overlapped/overlapping node apart) will open the cut.

## Intersecting cuts

When you draw a series of separate strokes that intersect each other, you create a polycurve that cuts out the underlying object.

### ▼ To cut shapes (Knife Tool):

1. Select the **Knife Tool**.
2.  (Optional) Cut with a straight line by enabling **Straight Line** on the context toolbar before you drag. By default, you'll cut using a drawn freehand line.
3. (Optional) For drawn freehand lines, check **Stabilizer** on the tool's context toolbar to draw smoothed lines using a Rope Mode or Windows Mode; use the former for redirecting a smoothed path using a draggable rope that can introduce sharp corners; the latter for a consistently smooth curve.
4. Drag the cursor across the shape.
5. With the **Move Tool** enabled, do any of the following:
  - Drag the newly split fragments apart after reselection.
  - Delete an unwanted fragment by pressing the **Ctrl** key, clicking a fragment, then pressing the **Backspace** key.
  - Select a fragment and recolor with the **Color** panel.

### ▼ To cut curves (Knife Tool):

1. Select the **Knife Tool**.
2. Do one of the following:
  - For a knife cut (creating separate curves): Drag the cursor across the curve.
  - For a scissor cut (creating a polycurve): Hover over a selected curve's target node or anywhere along a curve segment, then click to make the cut. The cursor will change to a scissors cursor.

Use **Separate Curves** via **Layer >Geometry** and the **Move Tool** to create separate curves from the polycurve, then reposition the curves independently.

3. With the **Ctrl** key pressed, edit the curve(s) (Node Tool behavior) or press the **\** key additionally to delete an unwanted segment on clicking.

💡 Use **Layer>Geometry>Cut Curves with Key Object** to cut into curves and shapes using a previously targeted key object (assigned with **Alt** key-click) in a multi-object selection. For example, you could use a morphed geometric shape to cut into underlying vector content. The stroke and fill of the key object are not considered in the cut.

▼    **To cut objects using Bézier curves (Divide Boolean operation):**

1. With the **Pen Tool**, draw a Bézier curve(s) over an object.
2. With the **Move Tool**, select the curve(s) and the underlying object.
3. On the Toolbar, select **Divide**.

The Divide operation will remove the pen strokes by default, although you can retain them by pressing the **Alt** key during the Divide operation.

 **Modifier keys**

With the **Knife Tool** active, the following modifier keys can be used:

- The **Shift Alt** keys draw a straight knife stroke across your object from a fixed position.
- The **Shift** key constrains a straight knife stroke to 45° intervals, including to horizontal and vertical.
- The right-mouse button, while it remains pressed, converts a freehand knife stroke to a straight line stroke as you draw; release the button to continue freehand knife cuts.
- To delete or edit cut fragments, press the **Ctrl** key, then the **Backspace** key.

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## SEE ALSO:

[Knife Tool](#)

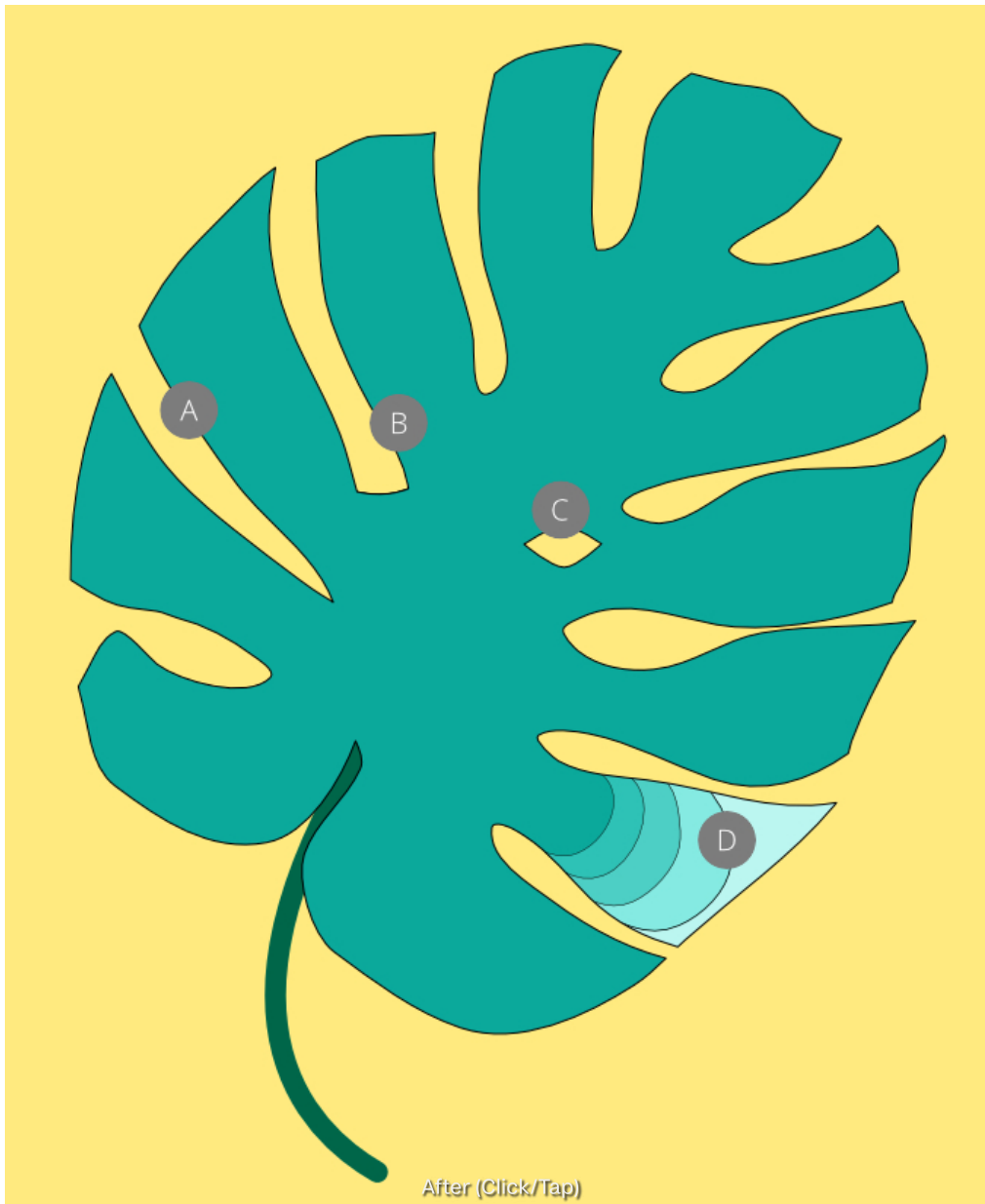
[Draw curves and shapes](#)

[Edit curves and shapes](#)

[Joining objects](#)

# Cutting objects

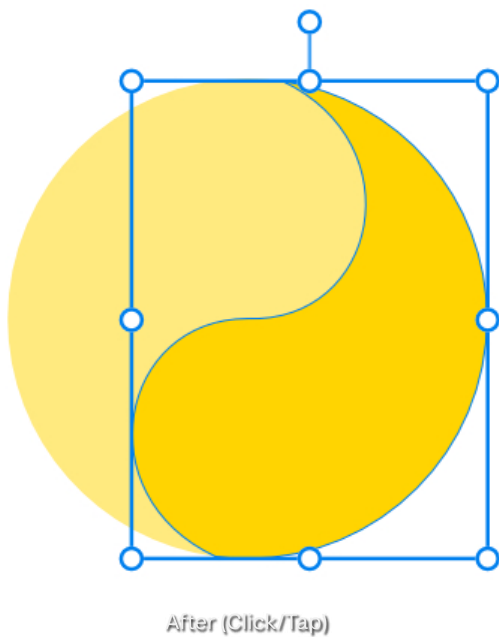
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Divide Boolean operation: splitting an object with a Bézier curve (drawn with the Pen Tool).

## About cutting

# Warping objects

The Vector Warp feature lets you warp one or more objects non-destructively. A choice of warp presets is available, with any preset being editable using a customizable warp mesh.



## About vector warps

You can warp shapes, straight lines, curves and text by applying a warp preset directly to selected objects. All warp presets apply a mesh to the objects which can be manipulated.

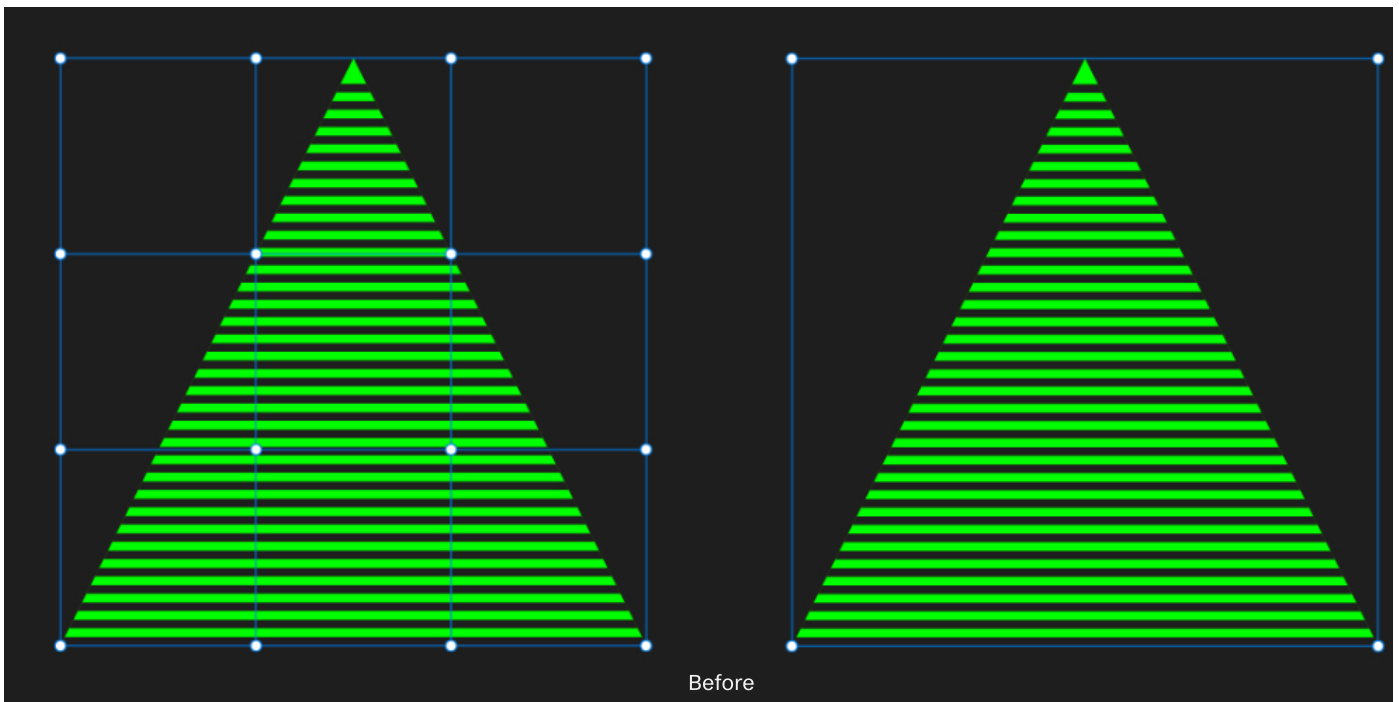
Vector warps can also be symbolized to allow warp edits to update across multiple instances of the same design at the same time. For example, when designing warped logos across artboards.

## Mesh, Quad and Perspective presets

With these warp presets, objects are not initially warped but need to be warped manually. The Mesh preset lets you reposition existing or manually added mesh junctions (circular nodes) as well as their control handles. Quad and Perspective presets let you drag by the mesh's corner junctions and control handles.

The presets differ because the mesh's junctions and control handles are set up specifically for mesh grid, quad and perspective warp design.





Mesh (left) and Quad/Perspective presets (right) showing their pre-warp state (Before) and after applying a warp by editing mesh junctions (After).

## Shaped warp presets

Different shaped warp presets can be applied automatically depending on the design you're looking for. They offer familiar and popular warps and can be a good starting point before fine-tuning the warp.



Shaped warp presets: Arc - Horizontal, Bend - Vertical, Fish Eye, Twist (left to right).

## Warp groups

Any warp preset will create a warp group that controls the warp. Contained objects within the warp group remain unaffected, giving the feature its non-destructive behavior.

Warp groups behave much like ordinary groups you'll find in Affinity apps. Any group can be moved on the page, while any contained object can be dragged in or out of the group at any time.

 You can create warp groups within a warp group to introduce warp-in-warp effects with each warp potentially using different warping styles.

### ▼ To apply a warp preset:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  -  On the **Layers** panel, select **Warp**.
  - Select **Layer>Warp Group**.



3. On the pop-up menu, select a preset.
4. On the context toolbar, adjust settings specific to the type of warp preset chosen. For example, **Value** controls how much warping is applied while maintaining the original symmetry of shape-based warp presets.

See Editing mesh warps (below) for details of how to move and add mesh junctions, as well as adjust a junction's control handles.

#### ▼ To temporarily hide the warp to show unwarped objects:

- On the context toolbar, select **Mute Mesh**.

#### ▼ To convert to curves:

- On the context toolbar, select **Convert to Curves**.

The object is turned into a closed shape made up of curves. For text, each text character is converted to a separate curve. The resulting curves are grouped automatically.

## Editing warps

Once warped, you can edit the warp using the **Node Tool** in a similar way to editing a curve, except you are actively warping as you edit, as opposed to reforming a curve or shape. Editing will let you reposition one or more junctions, adjust any selected junction's control handles, add junctions or reposition a mesh patch (the area enclosed by four mesh junctions).

## Selecting junctions

You can use various techniques for making multiple selections of junctions. This allows you to warp from multiple points in one operation. Selection methods include:

- Marquee selection—you drag a marquee over a range of junctions to encompass them.
- Individual selection—use a modifier key to select multiple junctions one-by-one.
- Lasso/polygon selection—use a modifier to drag a lasso around junctions or draw click-by-click polygons for more precise targeting of specific junctions.

## Snapping junctions

When you reposition junctions you can make use of two types of snapping, i.e.

- Global snapping—you can snap junctions to page horizontal/vertical center and page elements (e.g., margins and placed guides) just like snapping nodes when pen drawing.
- Junction-to-junction snapping—use context toolbar **Snap** options to align junctions to each other vertically and horizontally.

## Editing warp objects

Any contained object in a warp group can be edited independently of the group and other grouped objects. For example, you can fix a typographic error or rename the warped text at any time, or recolor a specific object.

#### ▼ To edit the warp:

1. On the **Layers** panel, click the chosen warp group's layer thumbnail.
2. With the **Node Tool** now active, reposition the junctions or connected control handles by dragging.

#### ▼ To add new mesh junctions to the warp:

Do any of the following within the warp's outline:

- Click on a mesh line.
- Double-click in any area enclosed by mesh lines.

The new mesh junction can then be:

- repositioned to warp the area directly under the junction.
- converted to a smooth or cusp (sharp) **Junction** on the context toolbar.

#### ▼ To move a mesh patch:

1. Click anywhere within a mesh patch, i.e. the area enclosed by four junctions, to place a circular 'hollow' junction target.
2. Drag the target in any direction to warp the entire patch, by moving its four junctions simultaneously and in relation to each other.

#### ▼ To adjust a junction's control handles:

- Select a junction and drag one of its control handles.

#### ▼ To snap junctions globally:

1. On the Toolbar, select **Snapping**.
2. Drag a junction to page horizontal/vertical center or page elements (e.g., margins and placed guides).

#### ▼ To align junctions using snapping:

- On the warp group's context toolbar, select a **Snap** menu option.
  -  **Align to nodes of selected curves**—will horizontally or vertically align any node you drag to any other node in the same warp group.
  -  **Snap all selected nodes when dragging**—will snap multiple selected nodes, when dragging, to a "target" node in the same warp group.

#### ▼ To edit warp objects:

Do any of the following:

1. With the **Move Tool** active, click on the target object in the warp group until it becomes selected.
2. Edit the object as you would normally do.



### Modifier keys

When using the Node Tool, the following modifier keys can be used to edit the mesh:

- Pressing the **Shift** key while dragging a selected junction(s) will constrain vertically, horizontally or diagonally (45°).
- Select junctions with the **Shift** key pressed to create multiple selections; click individual junctions to remove from the selection.
- Pressing the **Alt** key and dragging a control handle creates a sharp (cusp) corner on a mesh junction.
- Pressing the **Alt** key and drag over junctions to select multiple junctions within the drawn lasso area. Alternatively, select by drawing polygonal areas click-by-click.
- The **Alt** key temporarily overrides snapping.
- **Ctrl/Y** toggles between the active warp and an X-ray 'filled' view mode showing the warp muted (unwarped).

# Warping objects

The Vector Warp feature lets you warp one or more objects non-destructively. A choice of warp presets is available, with any preset being editable using a customizable warp mesh.



## About vector warps

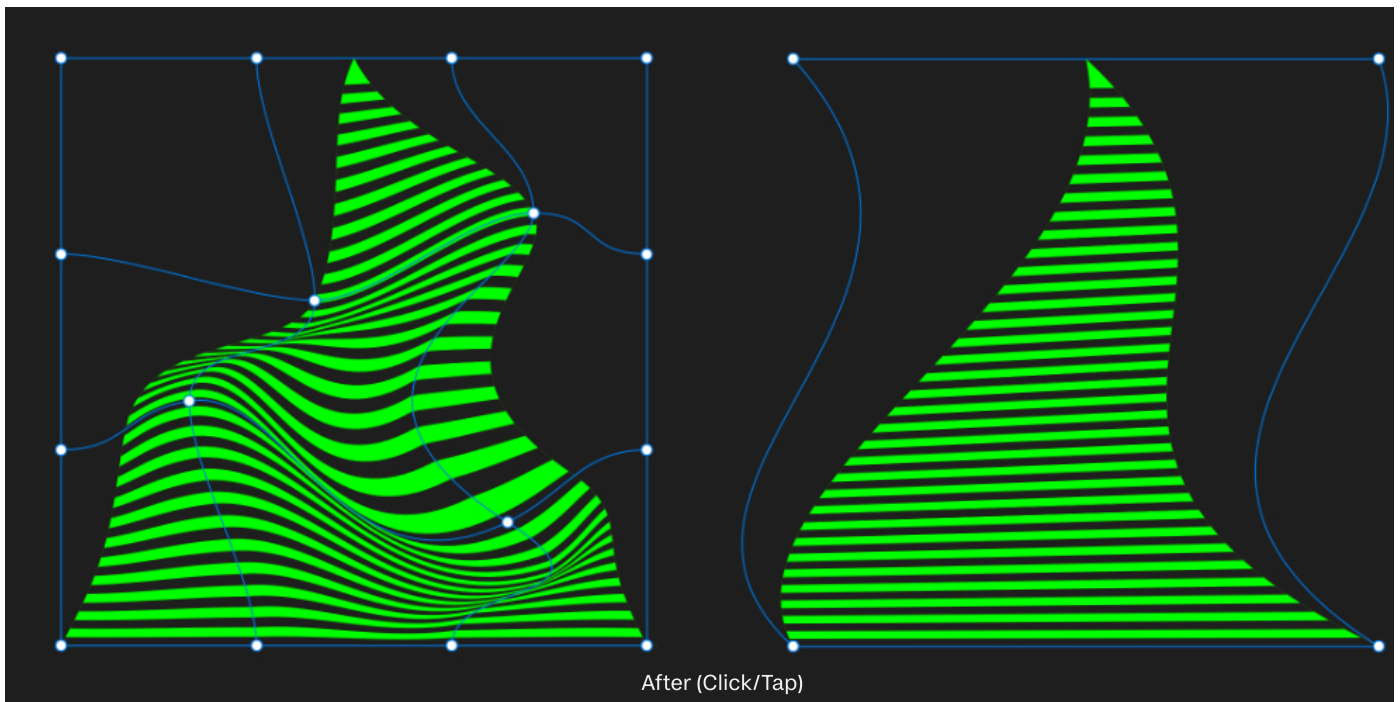
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Shaped warp presets: Arc - Horizontal, Bend - Vertical, Fish Eye, Twist (left to right).

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Any warp preset will create a warp group that controls the warp. Contained objects within the warp group remain unaffected, giving the feature its non-destructive behavior.

Warp groups behave much like ordinary groups you'll find in Affinity apps. Any group can be moved on the page, while any contained object can be dragged in or out of the group at any time.

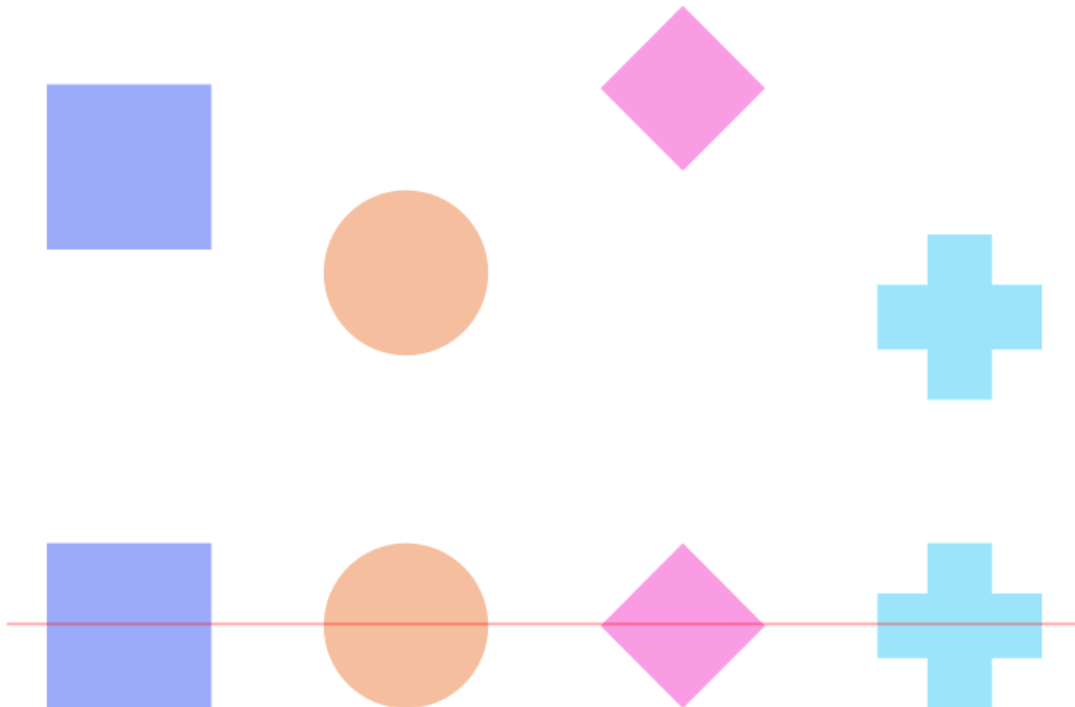
 You can create warp groups within a warp group to introduce warp-in-warp effects with each warp potentially using different warping styles.

### ▼ To apply a warp preset:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  -  On the **Layers** panel, select **Warp**.
  - Select **Layer>Warp Group**.

# Aligning objects

Objects can be aligned on the page accurately using the Alignment commands.



*Before and after vertical alignment applied.*

## ▼ To align objects:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  - On the Toolbar, click **Alignment**, set the **Align To** option, then an **Align Horizontally** or **Align Vertically** option from the pop-up panel. Click **Apply**.
  - From the **Layer** menu's **Alignment** submenu, select an alignment option.

The following settings can also be used from the context toolbar, either in relation to selection bounds or to a key object, designated by clicking on an object to align to with the **Alt** key pressed (the key object is identified with a strong blue outline):

- **Align Horizontal**—aligns the selected objects using the **Left** edges, **Center** points, or **Right** edges of the objects.
- **Align Vertical**—aligns the selected objects using the **Top** edges, Center points (**Middle**), or **Bottom** edges of the objects.

 To align objects on different layers, **Edit All Layers** needs to be enabled.

 Make use of more Align options by customizing the Toolbar (**View>Customize Toolbar**).

▼  **To toggle Edit All Layers:**

- On the **Layers** panel, click **Edit All Layers**.

## Alignment handles

When enabled, alignment handles appear as you drag objects, allowing you to place them precisely by lining them up in accordance with other objects in your document. Alignment handles are especially useful for aligning the edges or centers of multiple selected objects to another page object or guide.

►  **To add alignment handles to a selection:**

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### SEE ALSO:

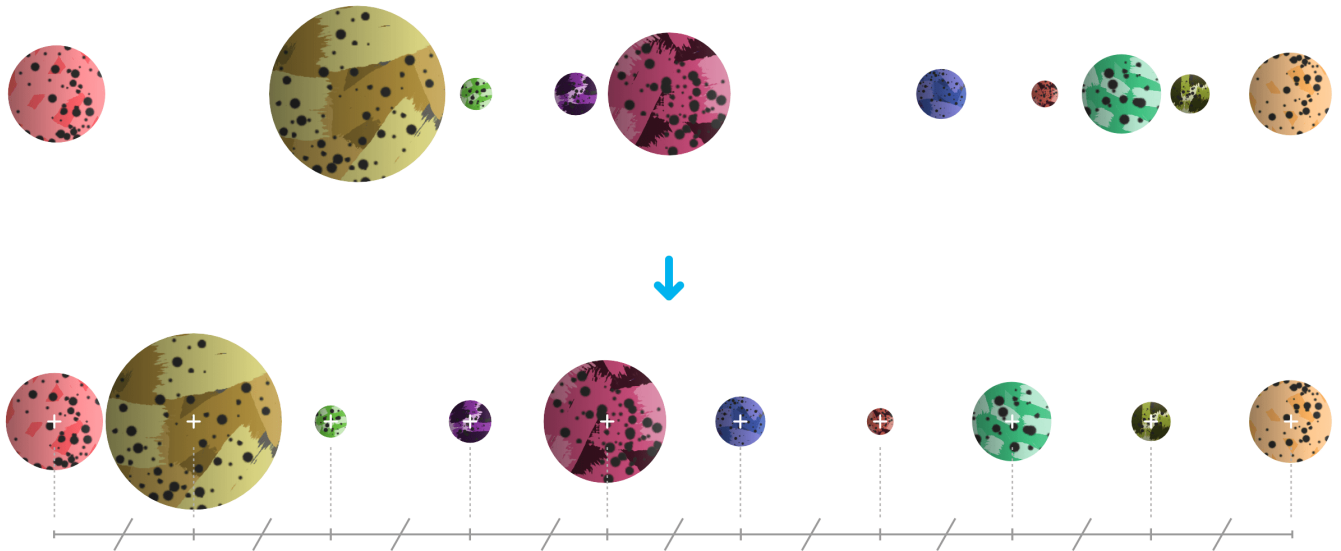
[Distributing objects](#)

# Distributing/spacing objects

Objects can be distributed or spaced evenly within object selection bounds using alignment commands.

## Distributing

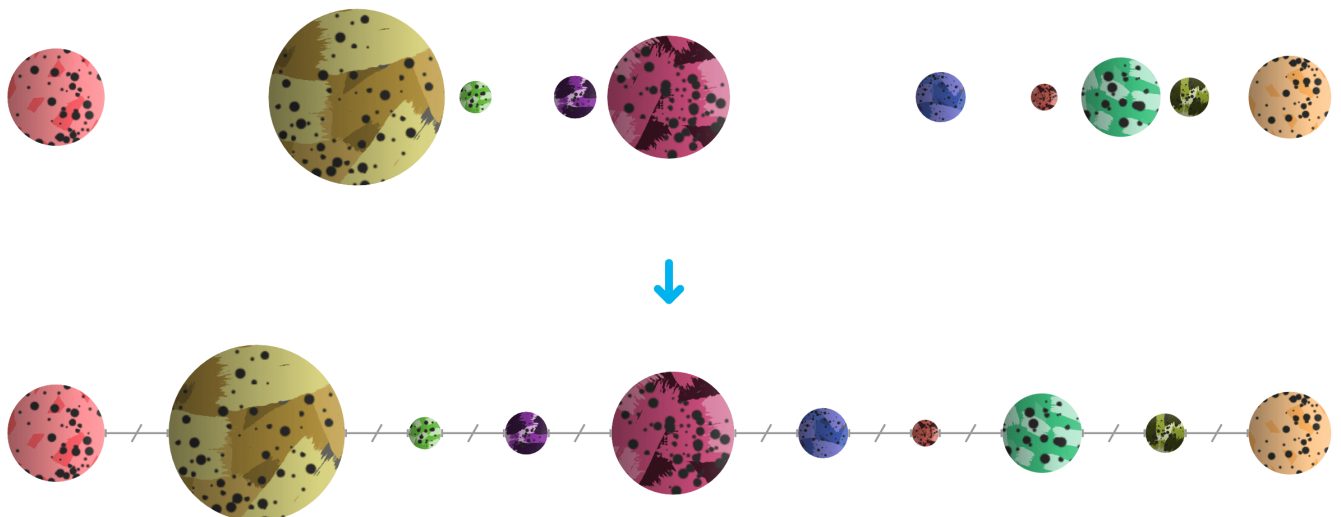
The distribution of objects involves setting an equal distance between object *centers*.



*Objects before and after distribution.*

## Spacing

The spacing of objects ensures there is an equal distance between object *edges*.



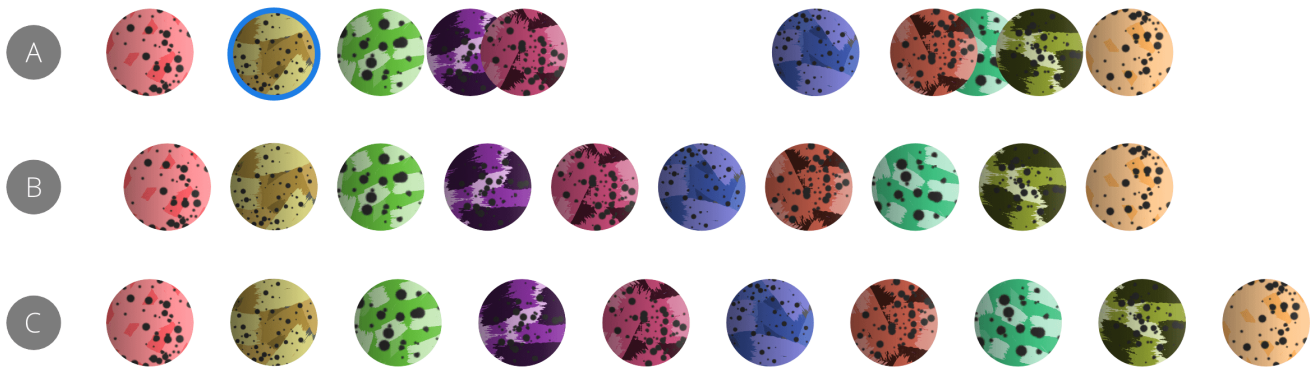
*Objects before and after spacing.*

## Spacing using key objects

Instead of spacing being calculated between selection bounds, you can control spacing in relation to any targeted key object in the current object selection. This targeting is done using an **Alt**-click on the target object. By then holding the **Ctrl** key after



targeting, you can set the overall spacing based on the spacing between the key object and the *rightmost* object in the selection. Without holding this key, the spacing is based on the spacing used between the key object and the *leftmost* object.



A targeted key object (A) used to set spacing horizontally from the rightmost object (B) or the leftmost object (C).

### ▼ To distribute or space objects (by menu):

1. Select multiple objects.
2. From the **Layer** menu's **Alignment** submenu, select a Space or Distribute option.

### ▼ To space objects (by Toolbar):

1. Select multiple objects.
2. On the Toolbar, click **Alignment**, click **Space Horizontally** or **Space Vertically** from the pop-up panel, and then click **Apply**.

 With **Auto Distribute** selected (default), the objects are spaced evenly within the selection bounds. If this option is off, a specified distance between objects can be set in an input box adjacent to the option.

 Make use of advanced distribute options in-panel by customizing the Toolbar (**View>Customize Toolbar**).

### ▼ To target a key object to space in relation to:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. With the **Alt** key pressed, click the target object. The key object will then possess a strong outline.

### ▼ To space objects using a key object:

1. Ensure a key object is targeted as above.
2. To space in relation to the leftmost object: select **Space Horizontally** or **Space Vertically** from the Toolbar's **Alignment** menu.
3. To space in relation to the rightmost object: with the **Ctrl** key pressed, select **Space Horizontally** or **Space Vertically** from the Toolbar's **Alignment** menu.

## SEE ALSO:

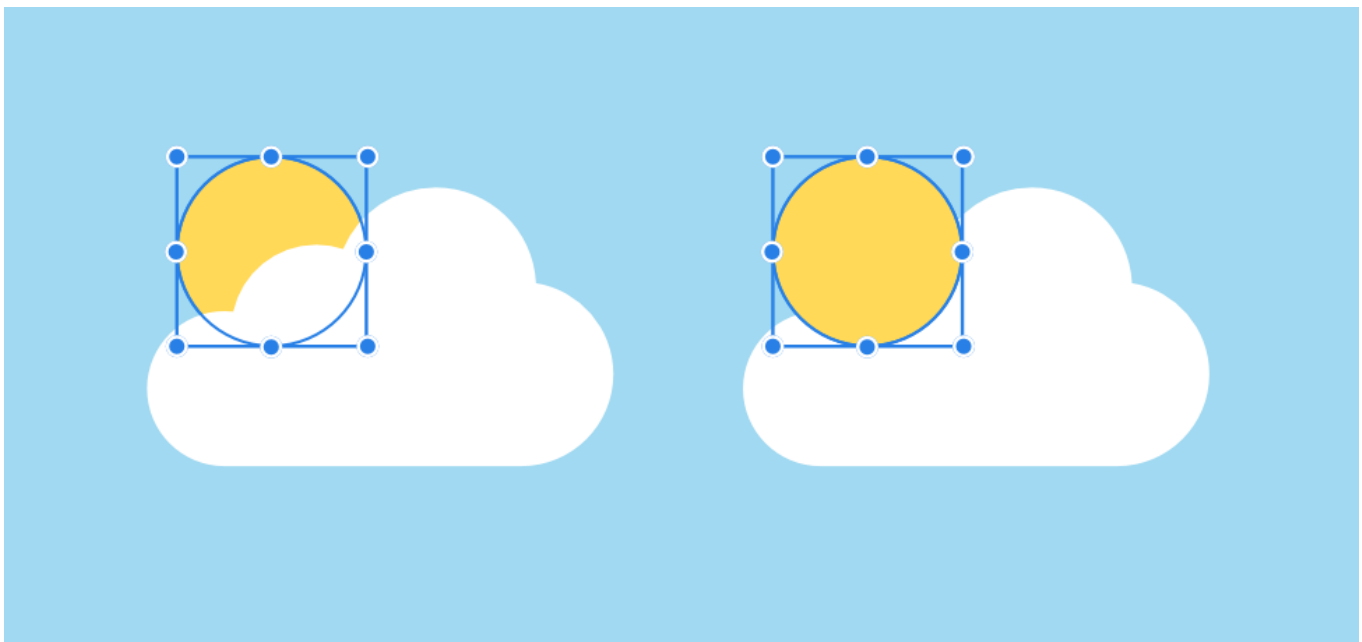
[Aligning objects](#)



# Ordering objects

Every object on the page occupies a specific position within a design's z-order (stacking order). With overlapping objects, this will determine which parts of the object are exposed and which are hidden.

When objects are placed or drawn, they are assigned a position in the currently selected layer's z-order. This initial position is determined by object targeting. However, all objects can be repositioned within a layer's z-order as needed.



*Before and after z-order repositioning.*

## ▼ To change an object's z-order position:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. On the Toolbar, choose one of the following:
  - **Move to Back**—repositions the selected object(s) at the bottom of the layer.
  - **Back One**—moves the selected object(s) down one position in the layer.
  - **Forward One**—moves the selected object(s) up one position in the layer.
  - **Move to Front**—repositions the selected object(s) at the top of the layer.



The above options are also available from the **Layer** menu's **Arrange** submenu.

 You can also reposition or nest objects using the **Layers** panel.

 To select nested content directly from the document view, select the **Move Tool**, then hold the Ctrl key and right-click an object in the view. From the contextual menu that appears, select any content contained in the same group as (or deeper than) the object you clicked.

---

## SEE ALSO:

[Targeting objects](#)

[Arrange/manage layers](#)

[Layers panel](#)

[Keyboard shortcuts for object control](#)

# Targeting objects

Targeting allows you to decide the z-order, or nesting, of an object during creation.

## Default targeting behavior

By default, drawn or placed objects are positioned:

- Directly above the current selection.
- At the top of the layer, if there is no selection.

## Alternative targeting behaviors

The default targeting behavior can be overridden so that objects are placed or drawn behind the selection, at the top of the layer (regardless of selection), or nested inside the selection.

You can override the default behavior for only the next object that is created, or 'lock' an alternative behavior so it's applied to new objects until you decide otherwise.

 After creation, you can reposition or nest objects using the **Layers** panel or the Order options on the Toolbar.

### ▼ To change targeting behavior:

- (Optional) If you wish to use the 'behind' or 'at the top' behavior on an ongoing basis, hold the **Alt** key.
- On the Toolbar, select one of the following:
  -  **Insert behind the selection**
  -  **Insert at the top of the layer**
  -  **Insert inside the selection**

 To revert to default targeting, click the Toolbar button of the currently selected behavior.

 Alternatively, you can access the default and alternative targeting behaviors on the **Layer** menu's **Insertion** submenu.

# Isolating objects

Isolation mode temporarily hides all layers apart from the selected layer or layer group. This allows you to focus on editing a selection without any distraction.

 The process of isolating objects is also known as **soloing** objects.



*Isolation mode activated for a single pattern (selected with the Node Tool).*

Isolating an object is extremely useful for manipulating overlapping objects.

## ▼ To activate isolation mode:

- On the **Layers** panel, hold down the **Alt** key and click on the thumbnail of an artboard, layer, group or object.

To exit isolation mode, press the **Esc** key, click another layer (from outside the isolated content, if the content is a group), or click away from the selection in the document view.

 **Zoom to selection** can be extremely useful before working in isolation mode. Double-click on the thumbnail of an artboard, layer, group or object on the **Layers** panel to zoom to display the entire isolated selection.

## Isolation mode and groups

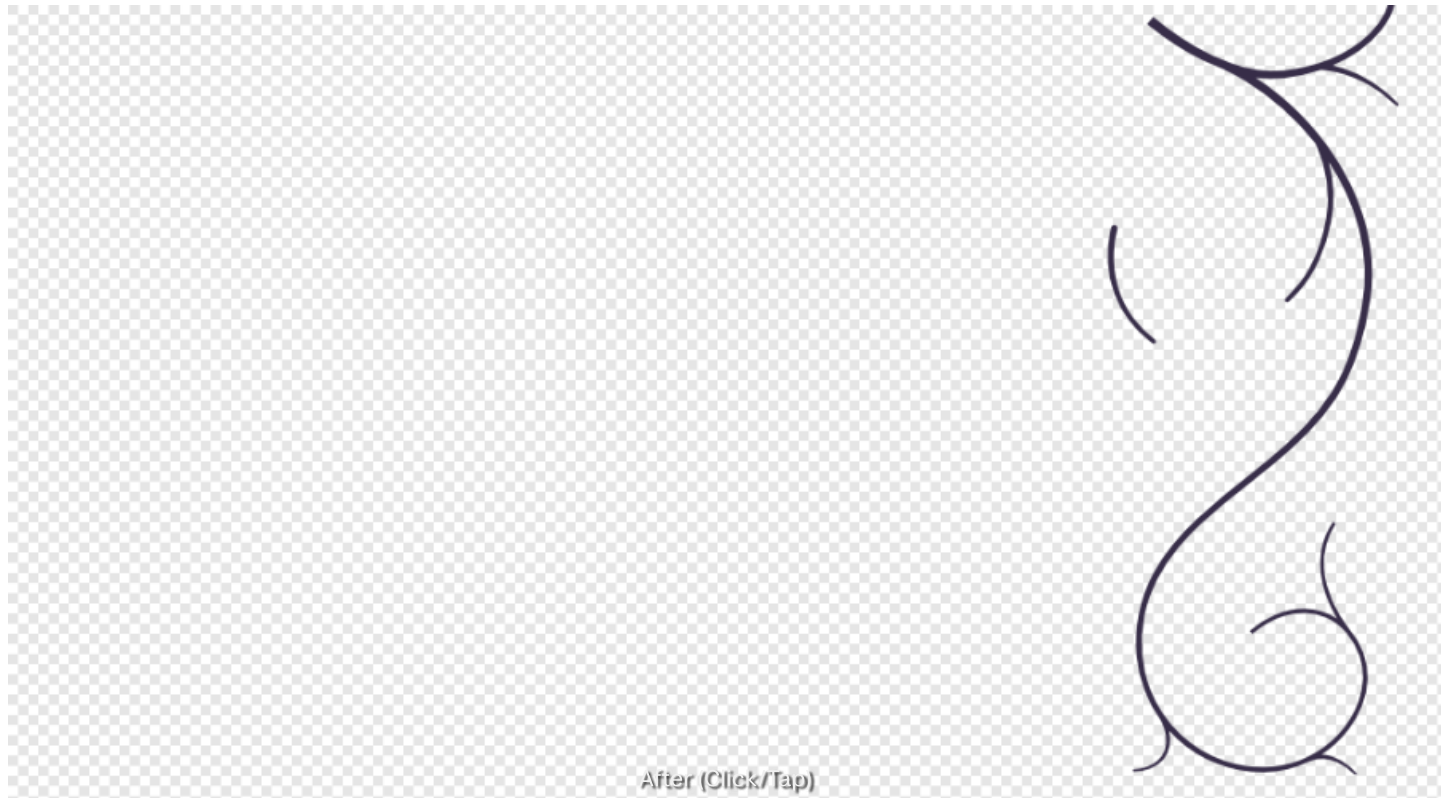
When a group is isolated, you can perform the following operations without exiting isolation mode or affecting its focus:

- Select and manipulate any of the group's items in context.
- Create new objects within the group.

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## Isolation mode and groups

When a group is isolated, you can perform the following operations without exiting isolation mode or affecting its focus:

- Select and manipulate any of the group's items in context.
- Create new objects within the group.

### ▼ To select some of an isolated group's items:

- Do one of the following:
  - On the **Layers** panel:
    1. Expand the group by clicking its arrow.
    2. Select one or more items inside the group.
  - In the document view:
    1. Select the group.
    2. Select an item in the group by double-clicking it.
    3. (Optional) Hold the **Shift** key, then click other group items to add them to the selection.

### ▼ To create new objects in an isolated group:

- Do one of the following:
    - Select an object in the group.
    - On the Toolbar, select **Insert inside the selection**.
  - Use a tool to create new objects.
- 

## SEE ALSO:

[Ordering objects](#)

[Arrange/Manage layers](#)

[Zooming](#)

# Finding objects

In more complex designs, it's really useful to be able to locate an object in your layer stack as you select the object on the page.

Two approaches to finding an object can be taken: either keep using the default Auto-scroll feature in the Layers panel or disable Auto-scroll or manually find the object instead.

Whichever method you choose, the result is the same; the object's layer entry comes into view in the Layers panel ready for you to work on it.

You can also find objects in groups, and groups themselves.

## ▼ To disable Auto-scroll:

- On the **Layers** panel, click Panel Preferences and uncheck **Auto-scroll**.

## ▼ To find an object in the Layers panel manually:

Do one of the following:

- **Right-click** the layer content on the page and select **Find in Layers Panel**.
- From the **Layer** menu, select **Find in Layers Panel**.
- On your keyboard, press **Ctrl+K**.

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## SEE ALSO:

[Ordering objects](#)

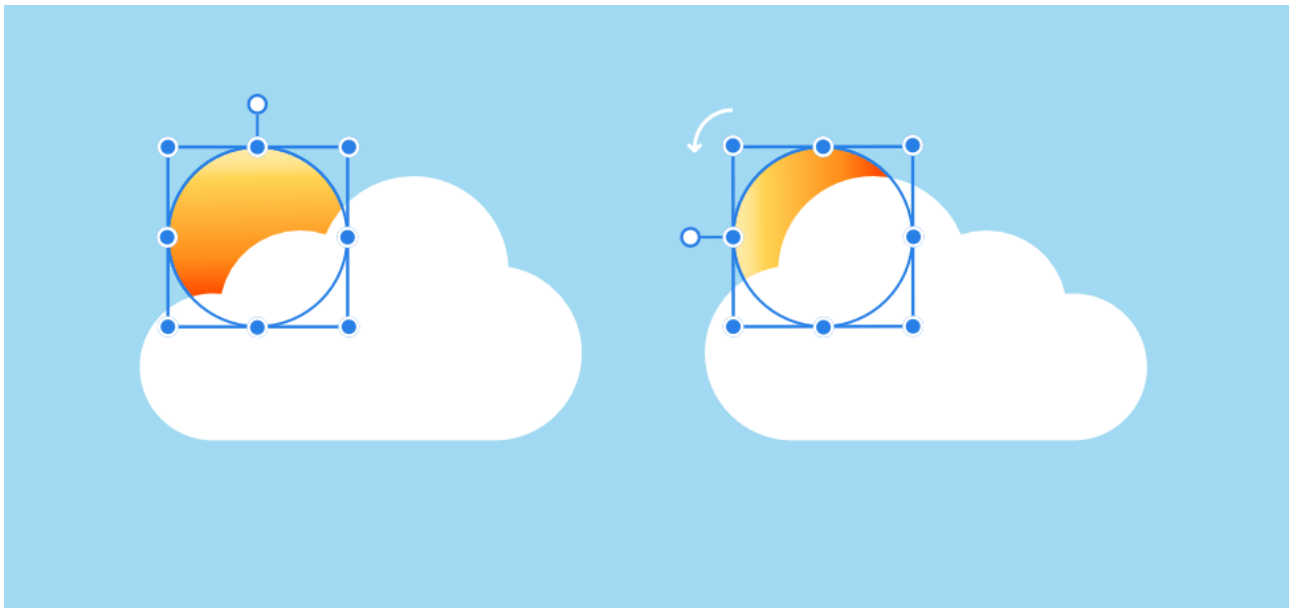
[Arrange/Manage layers](#)

# Transforming objects

Objects can be positioned, sized, rotated or sheared on the page either 'by eye' or with absolute precision. Flipping operations are also possible.

Transforming is a general term to describe the repositioning, sizing (scaling), rotation, shearing or flipping of objects. Several choices are available:

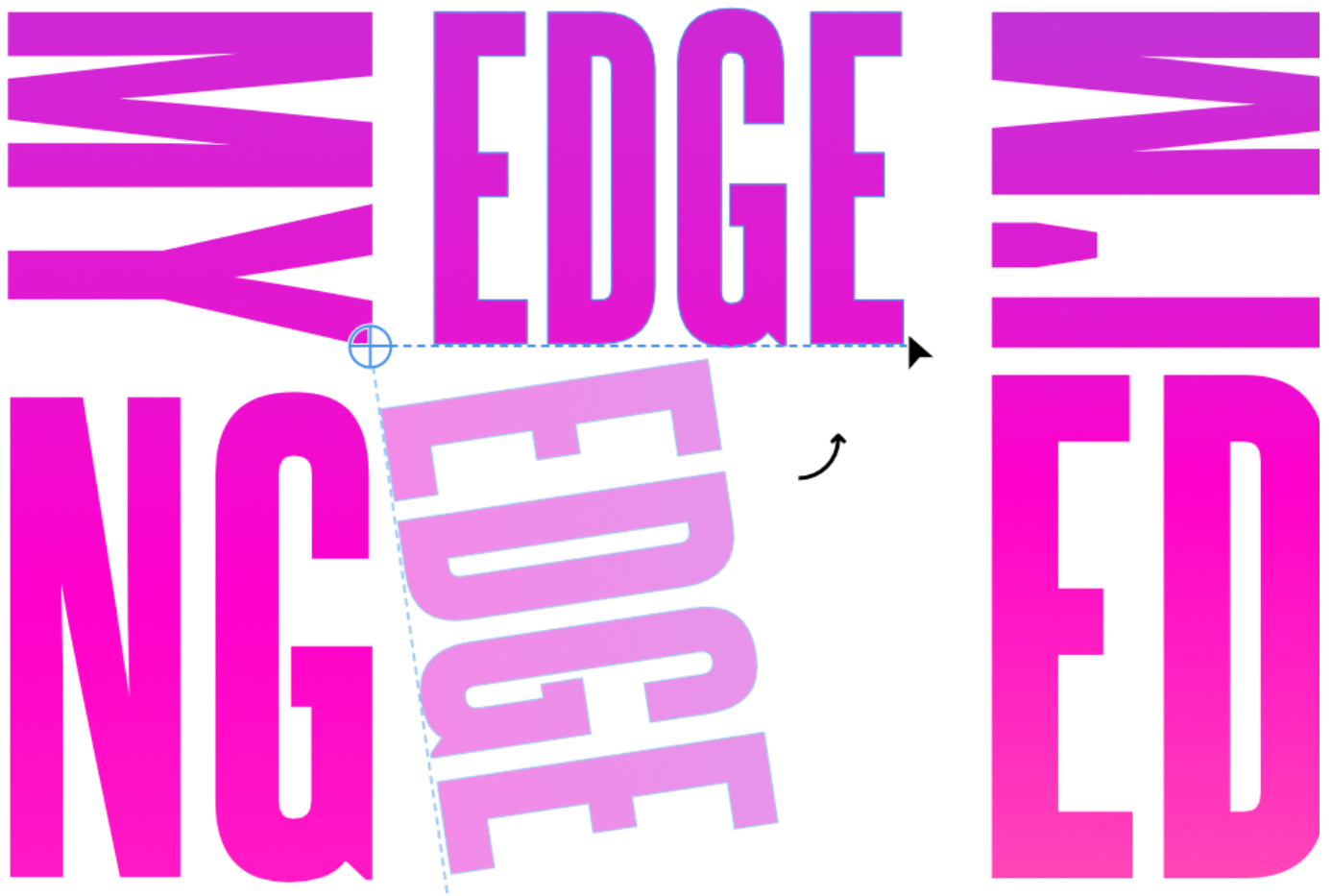
- "by eye": Using the **Move Tool** or by dragging control/rotation handles.
- Move data entry: For accurate repositioning, rotating, scaling and duplicating of objects (and artboards) by dialog.
- **Transform** panel: For accurate repositioning, resizing, rotating and shearing objects via panel.



*The background object has been rotated left, while the foreground object has been flipped horizontally.*

You can also transform an object about a point on its own geometry, another object's geometry or a point on the page.





The text object is rotated about its repositioned transform origin using the Point Transform Tool.

#### ▼ To position objects accurately:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. On the **Transform** panel, change **X** and/or **Y** values.

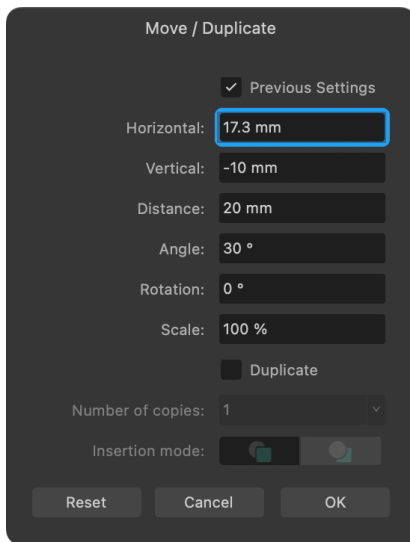
#### ▼ To nudge objects:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  - For nudging by a single unit of measurement: Press an arrow key.
  - For 10x the single unit of measurement: Press an arrow key with the **Shift** key pressed.

 As you nudge, dynamic measuring guides appear in the direction of travel.  
You can change nudge distances via **Edit>Settings (Tools)**.

#### ▼ To move, rotate or scale objects accurately (by Move data entry):

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Press the **Return** key to display a **Move / Duplicate** dialog.



Enter new settings that will offset the object from its original position, with optional **Angle**, **Rotation** and **Scale** settings.

**Distance** is the measurement between the original and moved object's centers.

The dialog also lets you **duplicate** the original object by a set number of copies.

Check **Previous Settings** if you want to retain and use the last used transformation values entered into the dialog; uncheck to transform with new values.

 The **Rotation** field will accept equations, so it's easy to set the correct rotation amount—simply enter the equation as, e.g.  $360/6$  if you were setting up six positions, then set the **Number of copies** to be  $\geq 5$  (as you already have one object).

### ▼ To size objects accurately:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. On the **Transform** panel, change **W** and/or **H** values.

 You can scale objects from a custom transform origin (rather than an anchor point) that has been placed prior to transforming.

### ▼ To size objects to same:

1. Select multiple objects, ensuring the object to be sized to is selected *first*. To do this, use **Shift**-click to target it first or a marquee selection that encompasses it first.
2.  On the Toolbar, click **Alignment**, then set the **Make Same** option, choosing to size to **Width** or **Height**.
3. (Optional) Check **Maintain Aspect Ratio** to ensure the objects will resize using their original proportions.
4. Click **Apply**.

### ▼ To size objects to a targeted key object:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. With the **Alt** key pressed, click the target object. The selected key object will possess a strong outline.
3.  On the Toolbar, click **Alignment**, then set the **Make Same** option, choosing to size to **Width** or **Height**.

### ▼ To flip or rotate objects:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Do one of the following:

- On the Toolbar, select a flip or rotate option.
- From the **Layer** menu's **Transform** submenu, select a flip or rotate option.



You can also [rotate objects](#) directly on the page by dragging the selection's rotate handle or by using the **Transform** panel.



### To transform a selected object about a specific point:

1. With the **Point Transform Tool** selected, reposition the transform origin to your chosen 'pivot' point on the current or another object's path (or specific node), or even a random point on the page.
2. (Optional) Reposition the shape so its transform origin snaps onto another object's geometry or node.
3. Transform the selected shape by dragging from a chosen node.



While using the tool, the **Transform** panel changes functionality to allow you to enter distances ( $\Delta X$ ,  $\Delta Y$ ), scaling percentage (S) and angle ( $\Delta R$ ) in relation to the current transform origin.



### Modifier keys

When using the Point Transform Tool, the following modifiers can be used:

- **Shift** key scales the object only.
- **Ctrl** key rotates the object only.
- **ShiftCtrl** key rotates the object only (in 15° intervals).
- Additional press of right-hand mouse button moves the object.



### To transform selected objects separately:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. With the **Move Tool** selected, select **Transform Objects Separately** from the context toolbar.
3. Apply a sizing, [rotation](#) or [shearing](#) transformation. Each object is transformed relative to its individual attributes, not those of the selection as a whole.



### To size selected objects separately to absolute sizes

1. Select multiple objects.
2. Ensure **Transform Objects Separately** is selected from the context toolbar.
3. On the **Transform** panel, resize by entering an absolute value into the **W** or **H** input boxes. For example enter `=100px` into the **W** box to make all objects 100px wide.

This absolute sizing is in contrast to scaling other objects in your selection proportionately to a targeted key object resized to, e.g. 100px. Note the importance of the "=" symbol to signify an expression being used.

## Scale override

When an object is resized, the stroke width, layer effect radii, corner radii and text frame contents can be forced to scale by using the **Transform** panel. If **Scale with object** settings are unchecked on the object itself (stroke, layer effect, etc.) then they will be ignored.



For best results, use Scale override when resizing and maintaining the object's aspect ratio.

### ▼ To override scaling on objects:

1. Select an object.
2. On the **Transform** panel, enable **Scale Override**.
3. Resize via the object's handles with the **Shift** key pressed.

### ▼ To override scaling on objects selectively:

1. Select an object.
  2. On the **Transform** panel, click the **Scale Override** down arrow to check/uncheck the following settings:
    - **Line weights**—useful when working on vector objects with a stroke. For example, you can either force or prevent scaling while resizing with the setting set to **Scale with object** or **Locked**, respectively.
    - **Shape corners**—to control the scaling of a shape's corners while resizing, you can either force (**Scale with object**) or prevent (**Locked** setting).
    - **Layer effect radii**—to control the scaling of the radius of a layer effect added to an object.
    - **Text frame contents**—to control the scaling of frame text while resizing; when set to **Locked** the container will scale while keeping text the same size. When set to **Scale with object** however, text will enlarge when resizing the container by its corner handles.
  3. Ensure the **Scale Override** button is enabled.
  4. Resize via the object's handles with the **Shift** key pressed.
- 

## SEE ALSO:

[Rotating and shearing objects](#)

[Duplicating objects](#)

[Transform panel](#)

[Perspective filter](#)

[Mesh Warp filter](#)

[Expressions for field input](#)

[Keyboard shortcuts for transforming operations](#)

# Rotating and shearing objects

Objects can be rotated and sheared directly on the page using the **Move Tool**.



(A) original object, (B) original object rotated, (C) original object sheared.

Positioning the cursor over particular areas of an object, multiple selection, or group and then dragging will allow you to rotate or shear. Feedback is provided by the following cursors.



Rotation is also possible about a custom transform origin positioned on your page.

## ▼ To rotate objects:

1. With the **Move Tool**, select one or more objects.
2. Do one of the following:
  - Drag the object's rotation handle.
  - Position the cursor close to one of the object's corner handles and drag on the page when the cursor changes.

 You can rotate with more precision using the transform options on the Toolbar or **Transform** panel.

## ▼ To rotate objects to same:

1. Select multiple objects, ensuring the object previously rotated is selected *first*. To do this, use **Shift**-click to target it first or a marquee selection that encompasses it first.
2.  On the Toolbar, click **Alignment**, then set the **Make Same** option, choosing **Rotation**.

### 3. Click **Apply**.

#### ▼ To rotate objects to a targeted rotated key object:

1. Select multiple objects.
2. With the **Alt** key pressed, click the target rotated object. The selected key object will possess a strong outline.
3.  On the Toolbar, click **Alignment**, then set the **Make Same** option, choosing **Rotation**.

#### ▼ To undo the rotation:

- Double-click at any corner handle when you see the rotation cursor.

#### ▼ To move the transform origin:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Select the **Move Tool**, then click **Enable Transform Origin** on the context toolbar. The origin shows centrally within the object or selection.
3. Drag the origin to a new position in the selected object, another object, or anywhere on the page.

Once you've moved the origin, you can rotate your object(s) about it as described above. If using the **Transform** panel, rotation is about this custom origin unless you choose to override this and use the panel's Anchor point selector instead.

 You can snap the origin to the bounding box, center, key points, or the geometry of other objects (or even the same object).

#### ▼ To reset the transform origin back to its original position:

- Double-click the transform origin.

#### ▼ To shear objects:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. Position the cursor close to one of the object or selection's side handles and drag on the page.

 You can shear objects with more precision using the **Transform** panel; this can optionally be about a custom transform origin.

#### ▼ To undo the shear:

- Double-click at any edge handle when you see the shear cursor.



## Modifier keys

When using the Move Tool, the following modifier keys can be used to aid rotating and shearing:

- The **Shift** key constrains rotation to 15° increments.
- The **Ctrl** key shears the opposite edge in the opposite direction by the same value.
- When rotating from an object or selection's corner handle, holding the right mouse button temporarily repositions the transform origin to the opposite corner.

---

## SEE ALSO:

[Transforming objects](#)

[Transform panel](#)

[Keyboard shortcuts for transforming operations](#)

# Rasterizing

Lines, curves, shapes and text can be rasterized to create pixel layers.

Rasterization has various uses:

- For when the appearance of complex vector gradients or effects needs to be honored, particularly for print artwork.
- To convert a placed image layer to a pixel layer (for pixel manipulation). By default, many brush tools rasterize image layers before painting.

## ▼ To rasterize an object:

Do one of the following:

- From **Layer** menu, select **Rasterize**.
- On the **Layers** panel, **Right**-click a layer and select **Rasterize**.

 Partly off-canvas objects will not be trimmed with this operation; if completely off canvas, the object will be kept.

 Multiple objects, on adjacent or non-adjacent layers, can be rasterized simultaneously. Each selected layer is converted to a discrete pixel layer, i.e. the layers are not flattened.

## ▼ To rasterize an object and trim off-canvas content:

- On the **Layers** panel, **Right**-click a layer and select **Rasterize & Trim**.

 Partly off-canvas objects will be trimmed with this operation; if completely off canvas, the object will be removed.

## ▼ To rasterize an object to a mask:

- From **Layer** menu, select **Rasterize to Mask**.

 When rasterizing a layer that has layer effects applied to it, a dialog offers an option to **Preserve layer FX**. Clear the checkbox to include the effects in the rasterisation



process along with the layer's shape, line, curve or text content. Leave it ticked to rasterize only the layer's content and still be able to edit the effects afterwards.

---

## SEE ALSO:

[Draw curves and shapes](#)

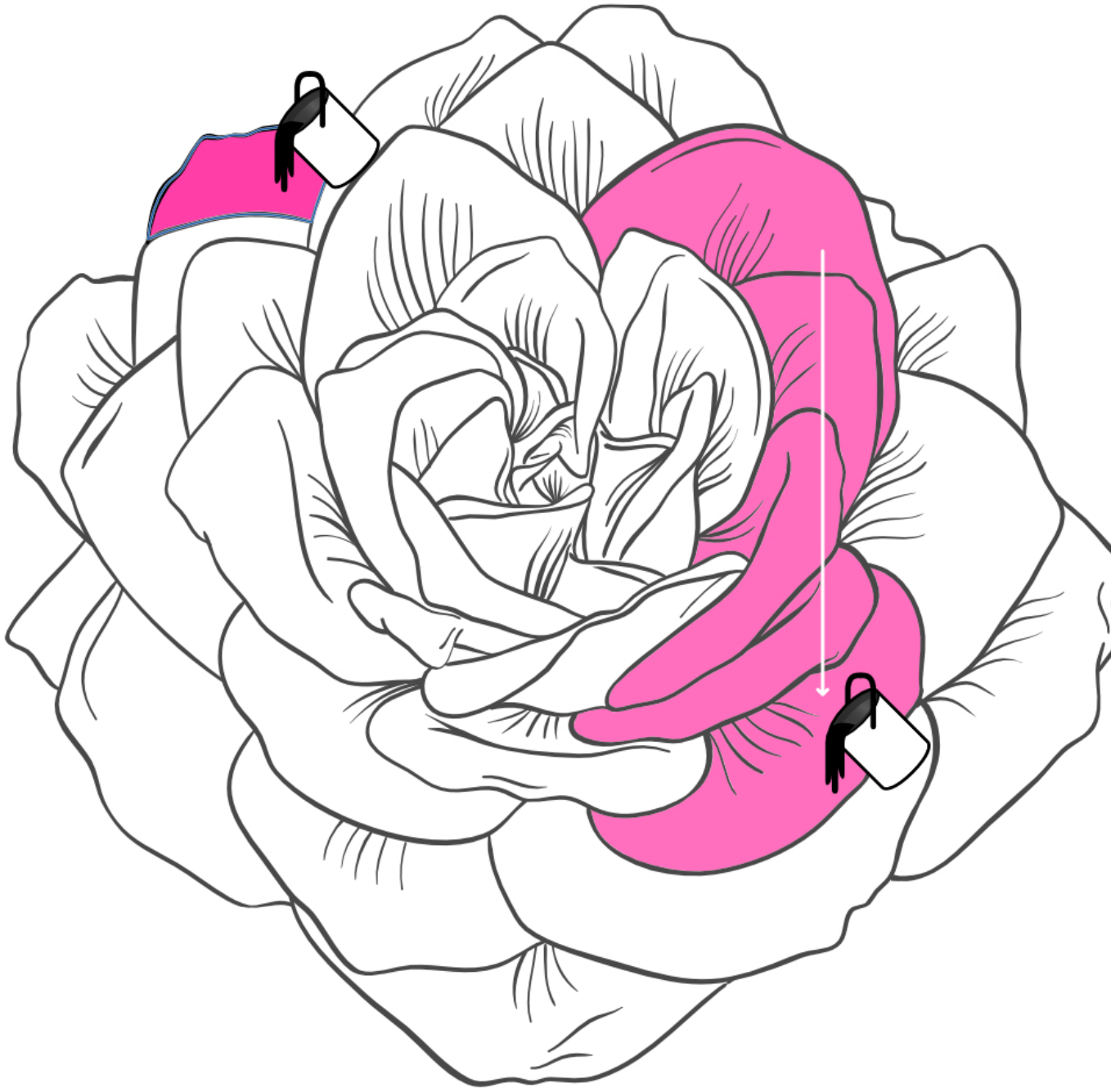
[Draw and edit shapes](#)

[Working with text](#)

[Selecting objects](#)

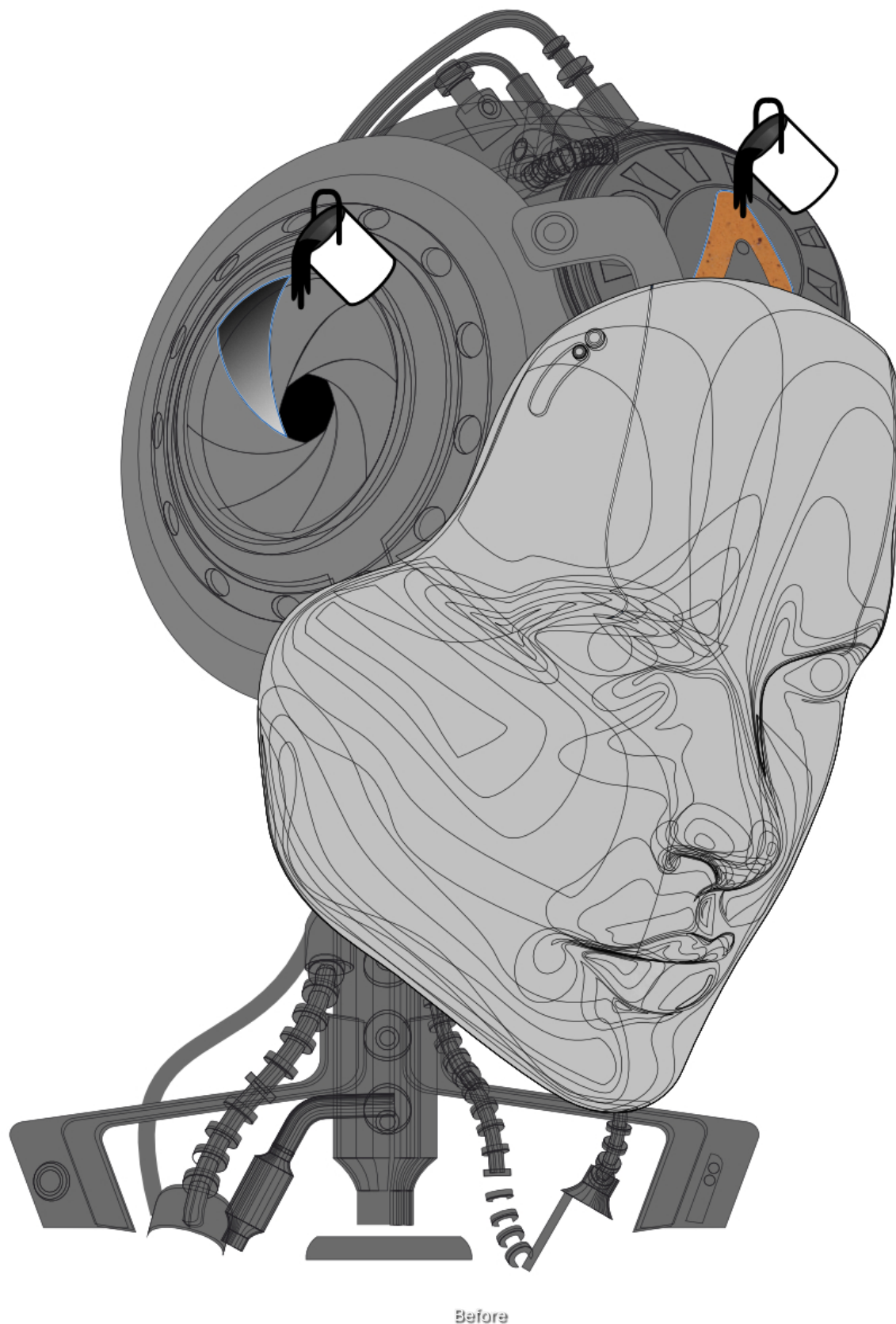
# Flooding areas

The **Vector Flood Fill Tool** lets you flood areas with color and texture as well as areas that can't otherwise be filled because they are not closed objects. New shapes are created as a result.



Before

*Before and after flood filling using solid color. The Before image shows the filling of both individual areas (by clicking) or adjacent areas (by dragging).*



*Before and after flood filling using gradient fills and bitmaps.*

## About vector flood filling

Flood filling lets you 'color in' areas of your design that can't otherwise be filled with the **Gradient Tool**. This includes areas created from overlapping closed/geometric shapes as well as open curves.

The **Vector Flood Fill Tool** detects edges in your drawing and then, if a fully enclosed area is detected, it will flood fill to the area's boundary. The current solid color (in the Tools, Color or Swatches panels) or color gradient (in the Swatches panel) is

used for the fill, thus creating a new shape. Assets (vector and bitmap), stock images and folder images (from your operating system) can also be used to flood fill.

Some examples include:

- Flooding areas formed by crossing pencil lines
- Creating complex filled vector meshes
- Quick recoloring of individual shapes
- Recoloring areas in architectural line drawings non-destructively

Flooding is carried out by clicking on areas or dragging across multiple areas. The latter being a quick technique that avoids flooding specific objects one-by-one. You can flood fill any object even if it is not selected (filling the whole object) but you can select objects in advance if you want flooding to take into account intersecting shapes and curves.



The area to be flooded must be self-contained by a curve's or shape's edges. The concave area formed from open curves cannot be flooded if not intersected by another curve.

## Fill types

The tool can flood with different types of fills, i.e.

- solid or gradient fills—from the **Color** panel (solid fills only) or **Swatches** panel.
- vector designs—from vector assets stored in the **Assets** panel. Note that these are converted to bitmap fills.
- bitmaps—from raster assets (**Assets** panel), stock images or images dragged from File Explorer.

## Scaling with gradient and bitmap fills

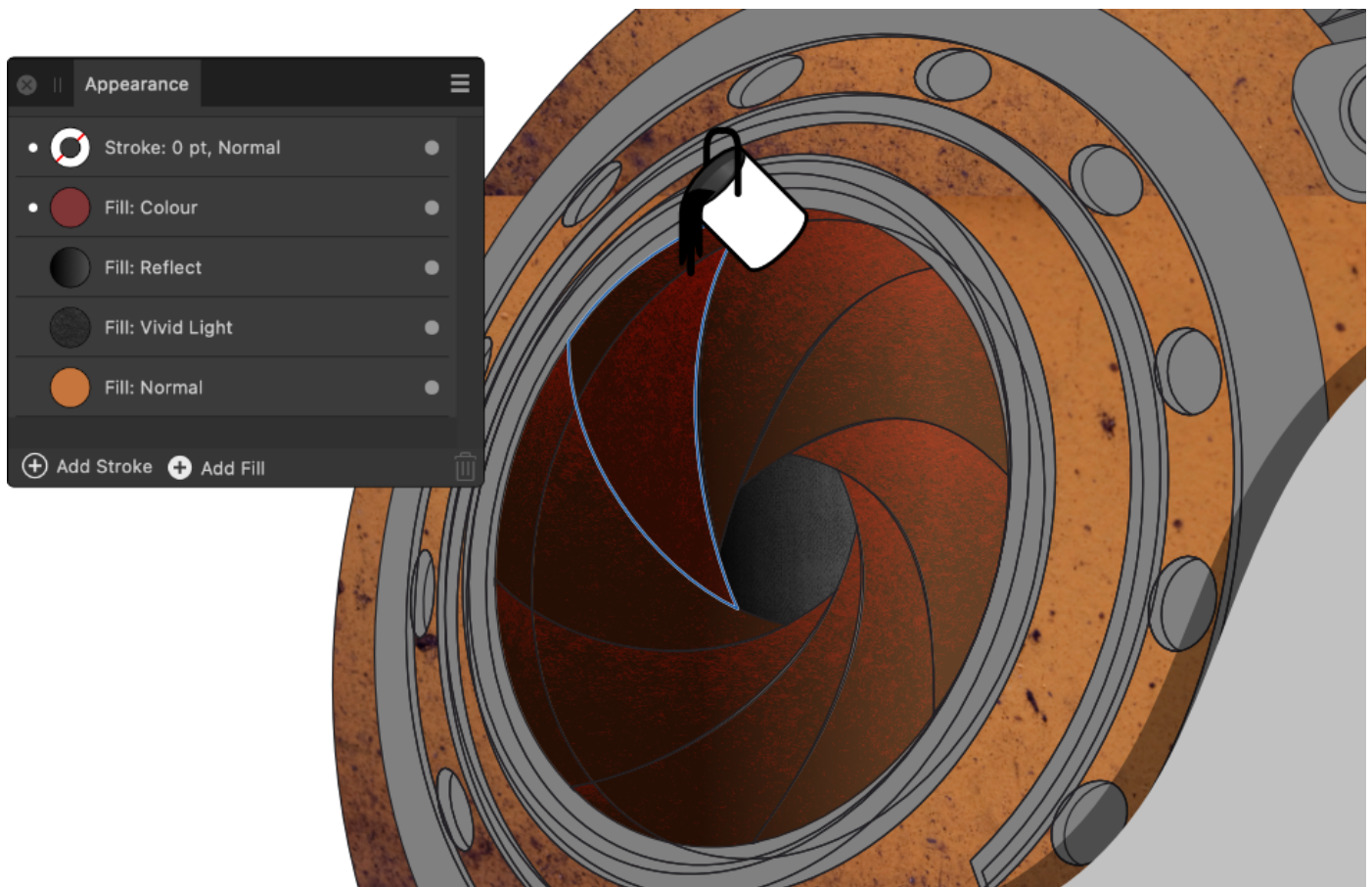
You can select the layer object of any gradient or bitmap fill for editing with the **Gradient Tool**—this could include swapping the gradient type, adjusting how the gradient/bitmap fill scales or how the bitmap pattern extends.



When applied, the gradient or bitmap fill is scaled to span all areas being flood filled. Separate areas being flooded with the same fill cannot adopt their own independent gradient/bitmap scaling.

## Flood filling with multiple transparent fills

If any of the above fills have reduced opacity or have alpha, they can optionally be 'layered up' to create multi-fill effects when applied in multiples. For example, transparency gradients and/or textures possessing transparency can be placed over a base solid color. A **Fill mode** on the tool's context toolbar lets you stack or replace fills.



Appearance panel showing multiple semi-transparent gradient and bitmap fills on a target area.

 Flooding with a solid fill will always completely replace any existing semi-transparent fill stack.

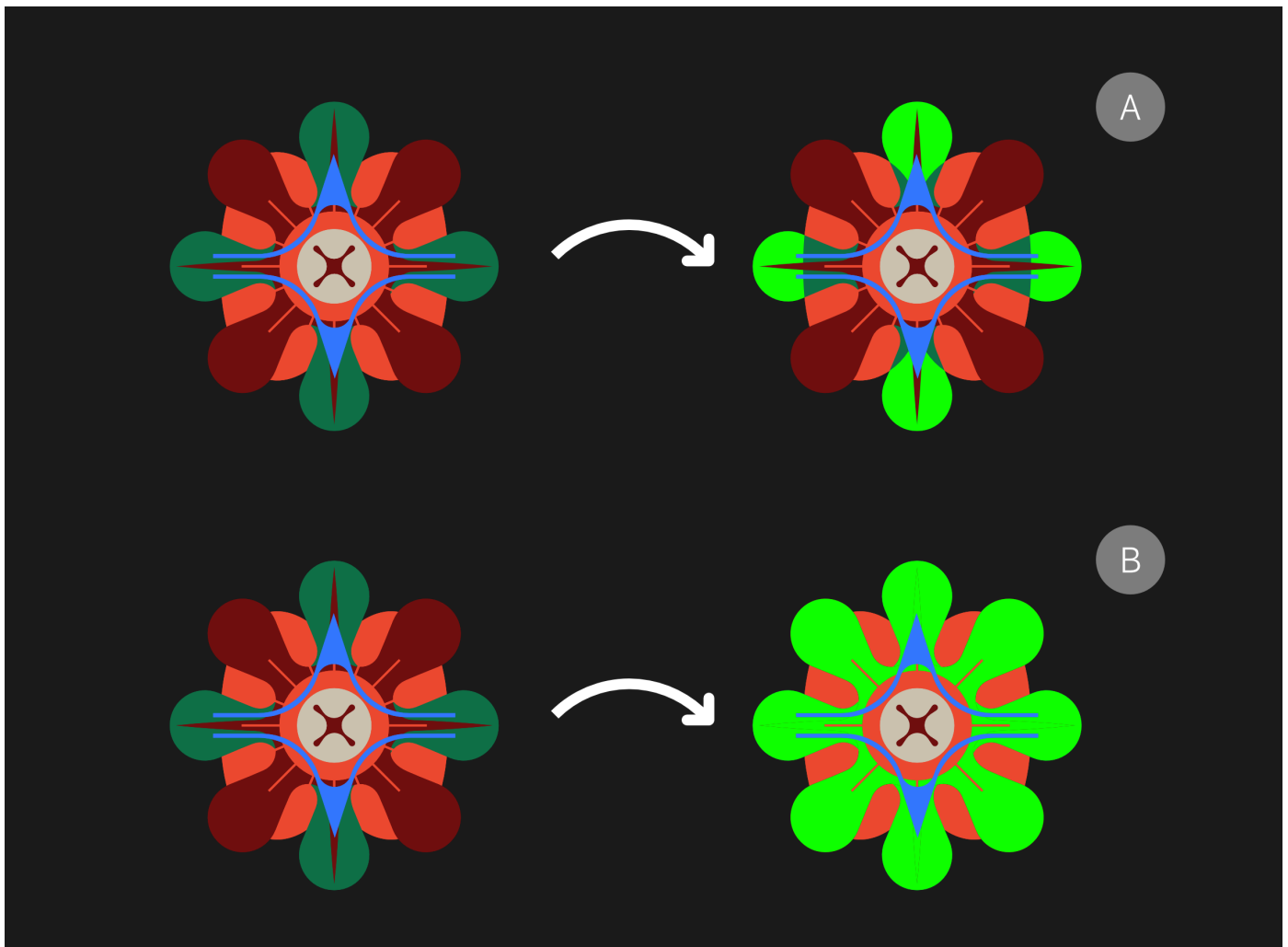
## Picking up flood fills from previously selected areas

Instead of defining the flood fill color via a panel, you can pick up the fill from previously *selected* areas with the **Alt** key pressed and then flood to other areas. Similarly, bitmap fills can be picked up instead of filling from a image file or panel.

 When picking up from areas with multiple fills, only the topmost fill will be used for flooding.

## Filling to visible boundaries

When dragging across areas to flood fill, you can enable **Fill to Visible Boundaries** to fill to overlapping shapes' outlines and either detect (and fill to) internal edges or ignore internal edges. For the latter, if shapes have the same fill color, then the flood fill will extend the fill to encompass those shapes automatically.



Flood filling (with green color) with Fill to Visible Boundaries disabled (A) and enabled (B).

### ▼ To flood an object with color:

1. Select the **Vector Flood Fill Tool**.
2. Set your preferred fill in the **Color** or **Swatches** panel, or from the **Tools** panel.
3. (Optional) On the context toolbar, set a **Fill mode** to control if semi-transparent fills are added to, smart refilled (ignoring identical fills) or replaced in a fill stack.
4. Click on an object. This doesn't require the object to be selected.

 You can drag a swatch from the **Swatches** panel onto an object too; a hover-over preview will be offered.

### ▼ To flood an object with a bitmap fill:

1. Select the **Vector Flood Fill Tool**.
2. Do one of the following:
  - On the context toolbar, click **Set Bitmap Fill** then navigate to and select your image. Click **Open**.
  - On the **Assets** panel, select your vector or raster asset.
  - On the **Stock** panel, search for and select a stock image.
3. (Optional) On the context toolbar, set a **Fill mode** for transparent bitmap fills as described in the previous procedure.
4. Click on an object.

Set the context toolbar's **Fit mode** to control its scaling in advance of flood filling.



 If you're filling using gradient or bitmap fills, the fill path of the original object is used for the newly flooded areas as the fill is a property of the page and not the object.

### ▼ To flood fill areas on multiple objects that possess intersecting curves and shapes:

1. Select the **Vector Flood Fill Tool**.
2. Drag a marquee selection over the objects whose areas you want to target, or select objects via the **Layers** panel.
3. Set your preferred fill in the **Color** or **Swatches** panel, or from the **Tools** panel.
4.   (Optional) On the context toolbar, choose an **Insertion mode** to control whether the new shape is to be clipped within the existing upper shape (**Inside**) or added between the shapes (**In-between**).
5. (Optional) On the context toolbar, set a **Fill mode** as described in the previous procedures.
6.  (Optional) On the context toolbar, enable **Fill to Visible Boundaries** to extend the fill to the outline of a shape or a curve's path, ignoring the areas formed by the overlap.
7. Do one of the following:
  - Click on an object.
  - Drag across multiple enclosed areas.
  - Pick up a fill from one of the currently selected objects using **Alt**-click and click on the target object.

### **Modifier keys**

The following modifier keys can be used.

For selection of objects when flooding shapes:

- The **Shift** and **Ctrl** keys add objects to the current selection when clicked.
- The **Ctrl** key clears the selected areas when clicked and makes a new layer selection of the clicked object.

For picking up fills:

- **Alt**-click lets you pick a fill from a previously selected area.

---

## SEE ALSO:

[Vector Flood Fill Tool](#)

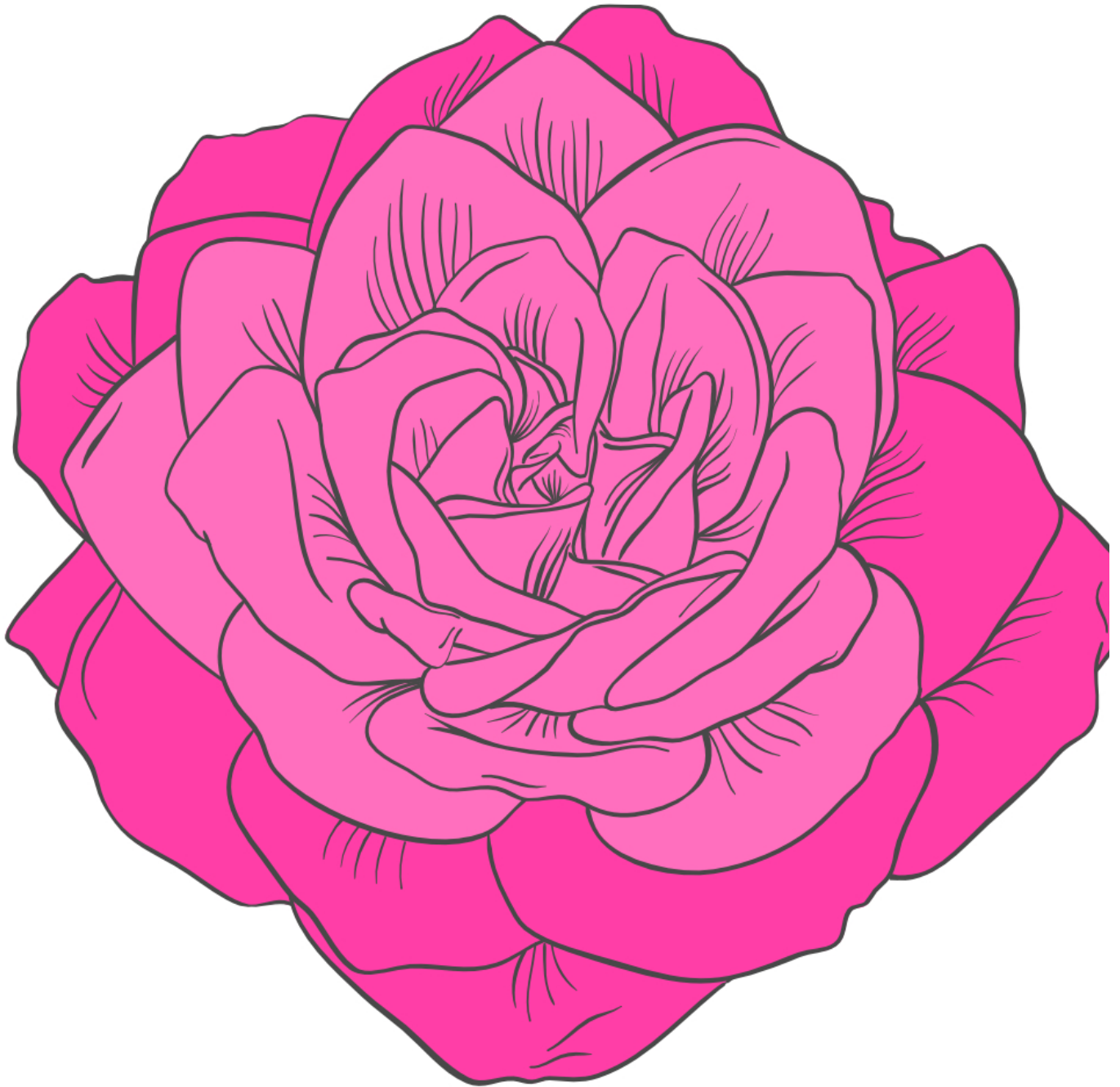
[Gradient and bitmap fills](#)

[Using multiple strokes and fills](#)

[Converting objects to curves](#)

# Flooding areas

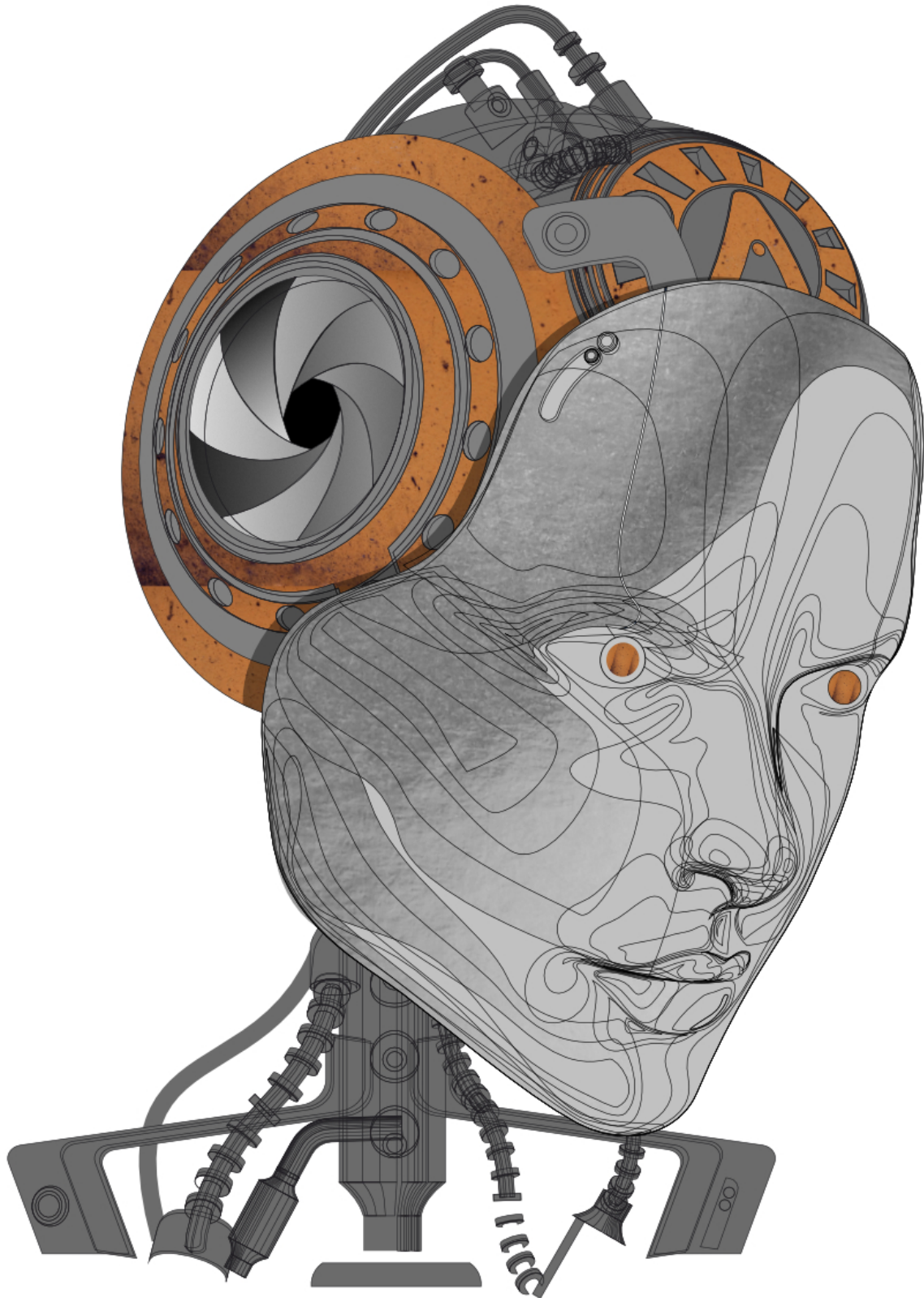
The **Vector Flood Fill Tool** lets you flood areas with color and texture as well as areas that can't otherwise be filled because they are not closed objects. New shapes are created as a result.



After (Click/Tap)

*Before and after flood filling using solid color. The Before image shows the filling of both individual areas (by clicking) or adjacent areas (by dragging).*





After (Click/Tap)

*Before and after flood filling using gradient fills and bitmaps.*

## About vector flood filling

Flood filling lets you 'color in' areas of your design that can't otherwise be filled with the **Gradient Tool**. This includes areas created from overlapping closed/geometric shapes as well as open curves.

The **Vector Flood Fill Tool** detects edges in your drawing and then, if a fully enclosed area is detected, it will flood fill to the area's boundary. The current solid color (in the Tools, Color or Swatches panels) or color gradient (in the Swatches panel) is

# Convert objects to curves

You can create new shapes by converting geometric shapes (created using the shape tools) into curves and then adjusting the nodes of the resulting shape.



*The rounded rectangle shape is converted to curves to allow the horizontal edges to be modified.*

The **Convert to Curves** operation is not limited to geometric shapes. You can convert almost any object to curves, including text.

cat

Before

*Text converted to curves.*

⚠ Once an object has been converted to curves, it can no longer be edited in its conventional way. For example, you would not be able to change the font of text once it has been converted to curves.

💡 New shapes can also be created by joining two or more objects together in a variety of ways. For more information, see the [Joining objects](#) topic.

### ▼ To convert a shape to curves:

1. Select the shape with either the **Move** or the **Node Tool**.
2. Do one of the following:
  - Click **Convert to Curves** on the context toolbar.
  - From the **Layer** menu, select **Convert to Curves**.

The shape is now made from curves and the **Node Tool** is automatically selected. Segments and nodes can be modified with the Node Tool.

---

## SEE ALSO:

[Draw and edit shapes](#)

[Edit curves and shapes](#)

[Joining objects with Booleans](#)

# Convert objects to curves

You can create new shapes by converting geometric shapes (created using the shape tools) into curves and then adjusting the nodes of the resulting shape.



*The rounded rectangle shape is converted to curves to allow the horizontal edges to be modified.*

The **Convert to Curves** operation is not limited to geometric shapes. You can convert almost any object to curves, including text.

cat

*After (Click/Tap)*

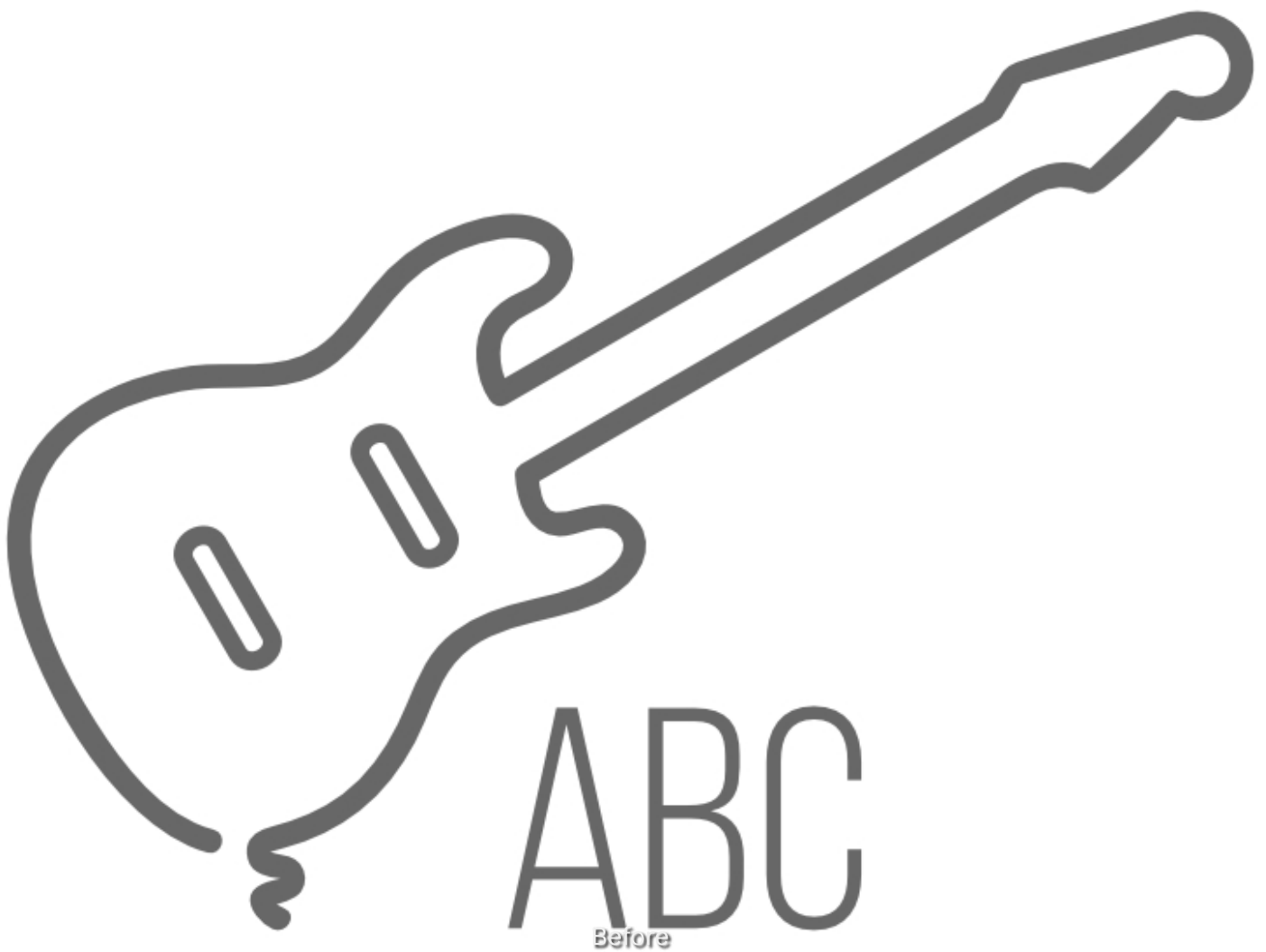
*Text converted to curves.*

⚠ Once an object has been converted to curves, it can no longer be edited in its conventional way. For example, you would not be able to change the font of text once it has been converted to curves.

# Styles

Instead of having to create effects, fills, colors and properties for your design from scratch, the **Styles** panel can be used to apply a pre-designed style to your object (shape, artistic text or frame text). If you want to save a combination of the above for future use, these can be stored in the panel as a custom style.

💡 Styles can be copied and pasted between objects by using the **Style Picker Tool**.



*Neon style applied from the Styles panel.*

💡 If you plan to save some styles, create a custom category in the panel first.

## ▼ To apply a style:

1. From the **Styles** panel, select a category from the pop-up menu.
2. Click on your chosen style with an object selected, or select and drag your it onto your object to apply it to the object.

### ▼ **To create a custom category:**

1. Click Panel Preferences and choose **Add New Category** from the menu.
2. On the dialog, give the category a name, e.g. MyStyles.

### ▼ **To rename a styles category:**

1. Choose the category you want to rename from the category pop-up menu.
2. Click Panel Preferences and choose **Rename Category** from the menu.
3. Type a new name for the category in the dialog and click **OK**.

### ▼ **To save a style:**

1. On the **Styles** panel, select a category to save the style into.
2. Do one of the following:
  - Select the object whose style you want to save, click Panel Preferences on the **Styles** panel, then choose **Add Style from Selection** from the menu.
  - **Right-click** the object and select **Create Style**.

### ▼ **To sample the style of an object or text:**

1. Select the **Style Picker Tool**.
2. In the document view, click an object or a character in text.

### ▼ **To apply a sampled style to objects/text one at a time:**

After sampling a style:

1. On the context toolbar, select the style attributes you wish to apply.
2. In the document view, click an object or a word, or select a text range.
3. Repeat for any additional objects you wish to style.

### ▼ **To apply a sampled style to multiple objects simultaneously:**

1. In the document view or on the **Layers** panel, select the objects you wish to style.
2. Select the **Style Picker Tool**.
3. On the context toolbar, select the attributes you wish to apply.

4. Sample the style of an object or a character in text.

💡 Alternatively, with a style loaded onto the Style Picker Tool, drag a selection marquee around the objects you wish to style. Optionally, pressing the right mouse button while dragging selects objects which are only partially covered by the selection marquee. This behavior can be made the default in Preferences.



## Settings (or Preferences)

Related behaviors can be adjusted from [the app's settings](#):

- **Miscellaneous>Reset Object Styles**

---

## SEE ALSO:

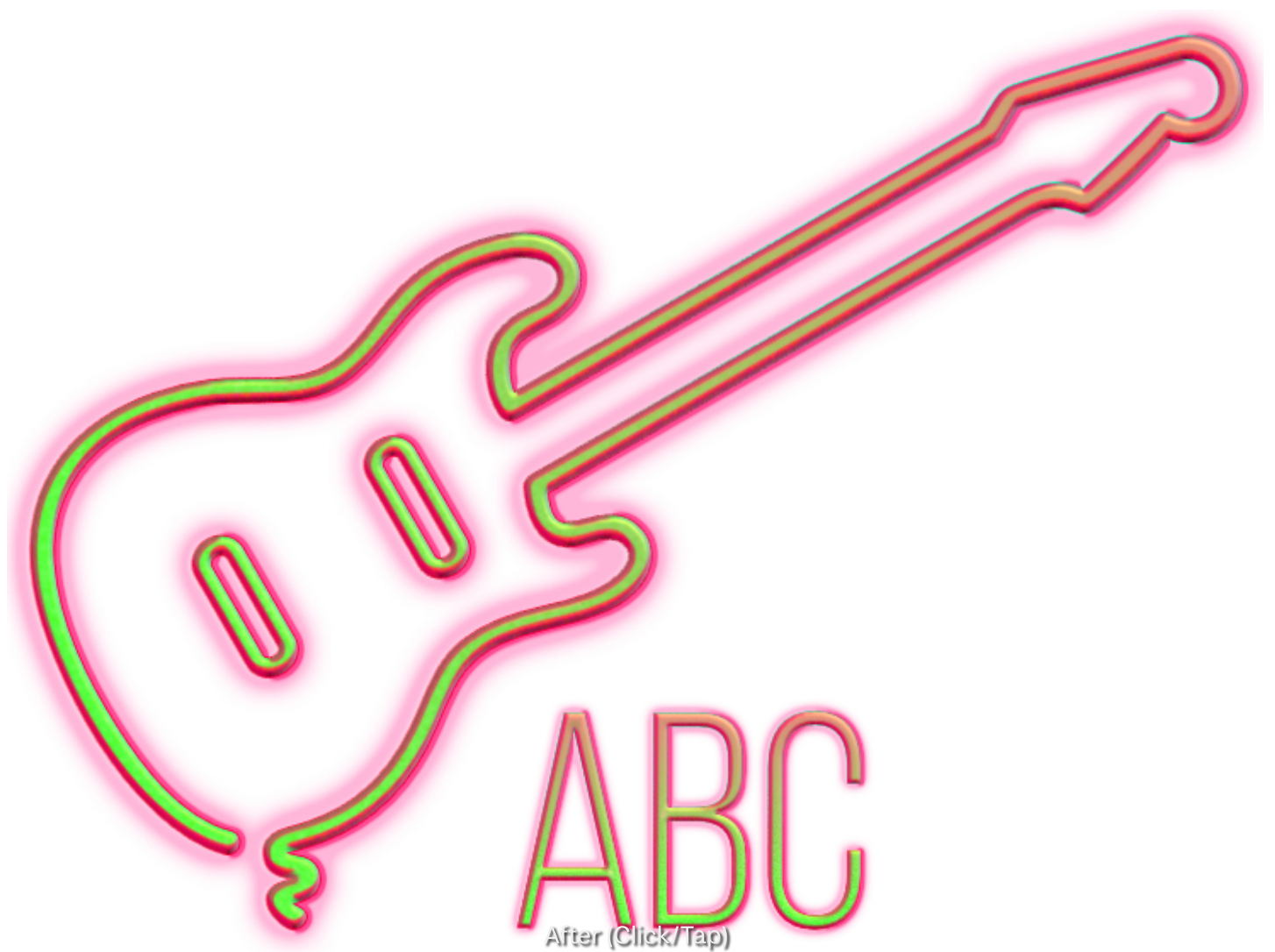
[Styles panel](#)



# Styles

Instead of having to create effects, fills, colors and properties for your design from scratch, the **Styles** panel can be used to apply a pre-designed style to your object (shape, artistic text or frame text). If you want to save a combination of the above for future use, these can be stored in the panel as a custom style.

💡 Styles can be copied and pasted between objects by using the **Style Picker Tool**.



*Neon style applied from the Styles panel.*

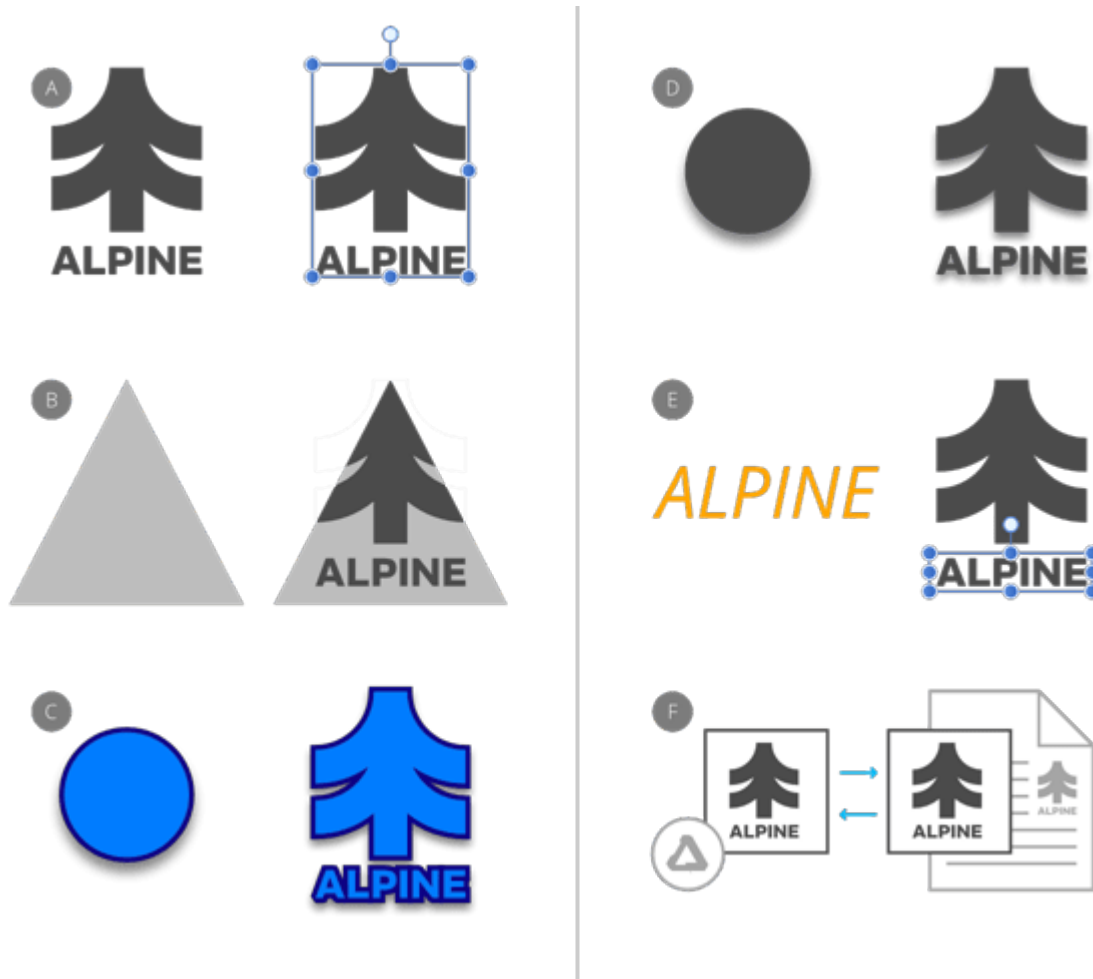
💡 If you plan to save some styles, create a custom category in the panel first.

## ▼ To apply a style:



# Copying and pasting objects

The **Edit** menu provides multiple ways to copy and paste objects. Pasted objects can include/exclude specific copied object properties.



(A) Paste, (B) Paste Inside, (C) Paste Style (Stroke, Fill and Outer Shadow), (D) Paste FX (Outer Shadow layer effect only), (E) Paste without Format (retains target formatting), (F) Paste Special (Windows only); pastes as a choice of clipboard formats such as SVG, Device Independent Bitmap, etc.

## About copying

You can copy content throughout the app or externally to third-party apps. Both need a reciprocal pasting operation to add the content to the target page.

The **Copy items as SVG** preference [(accessed via **Settings** or **Preferences (General** section)] copies objects in SVG format in readiness for pasting to external apps.

## About pasting

As well as the commonly used Paste command, other paste commands can be used to selectively control which object's properties are included/excluded in the paste operation.

| Paste option             | Description                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Paste                    | Pastes objects, preserving the copied object's look and formatting.                                                                                                            |
| Paste Inside             | Pastes an object inside another object.                                                                                                                                        |
| Paste Style <sup>1</sup> | Pastes copied stroke, fill, layer effects and text formatting/styles <sup>2, 3</sup> to another object/text.                                                                   |
| Paste FX                 | Pastes only layer effect(s) to another object.                                                                                                                                 |
| Paste without Format     | Pastes unformatted text by stripping the formatting from the copied text. When pasted, the target text will retain its text formatting.                                        |
| Paste Special            | Pastes copied content into and out of your Affinity app using a choice of clipboard formats that show dynamically by the type of content copied externally or within Affinity. |

<sup>1</sup> Use the **Style Picker Tool** instead if you want to paste only some of the copied style attributes, e.g. paragraph settings but not character settings and other object styles.

<sup>2</sup> If the copied text contains text ranges with different formatting, the formatting of its first character will be pasted.

<sup>3</sup> If copied text's formatting includes settings that are incompatible with the target text, the incompatible settings will not be pasted. For example, horizontal centering is ignored when pasting onto a range *within* a left-aligned paragraph.

## About Paste Special

When using **Paste Special** you will be offered a choice of clipboard formats to use for pasting. These options are dependent on the type of content copied and will dynamically change accordingly.

For example, for copied curves and shapes your formats are:

- image/x-inkscape-svg <sup>1</sup>
- SVG <sup>1</sup>
- Portable Document Format
- PNG
- Device Independent Bitmap

- Serif Persona Nodes <sup>2</sup>

For text, the available choices will be different, and may include:

- Unicode text
- Rich Text Format
- Serif Persona Story <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These clipboard formats are available when **Copy items as SVG** is enabled [(via **Settings** or **Preferences (General)** section)].

<sup>2</sup> These are proprietary Affinity formats that retain the highest level of fidelity to the original copied object. This format is used by default when copying and pasting between Affinity apps.

### ▼ To copy objects:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. From the **Edit** menu, select **Copy**.

### ▼ To paste objects:

1. Select one or more objects.
2. From the **Edit** menu, select one of the paste options.

 \*Alternatively, you can cut (rather than copy) the object. From the **Edit** menu, select **Cut**.

---

## SEE ALSO:

[Targeting objects](#)

[Layer clipping](#)

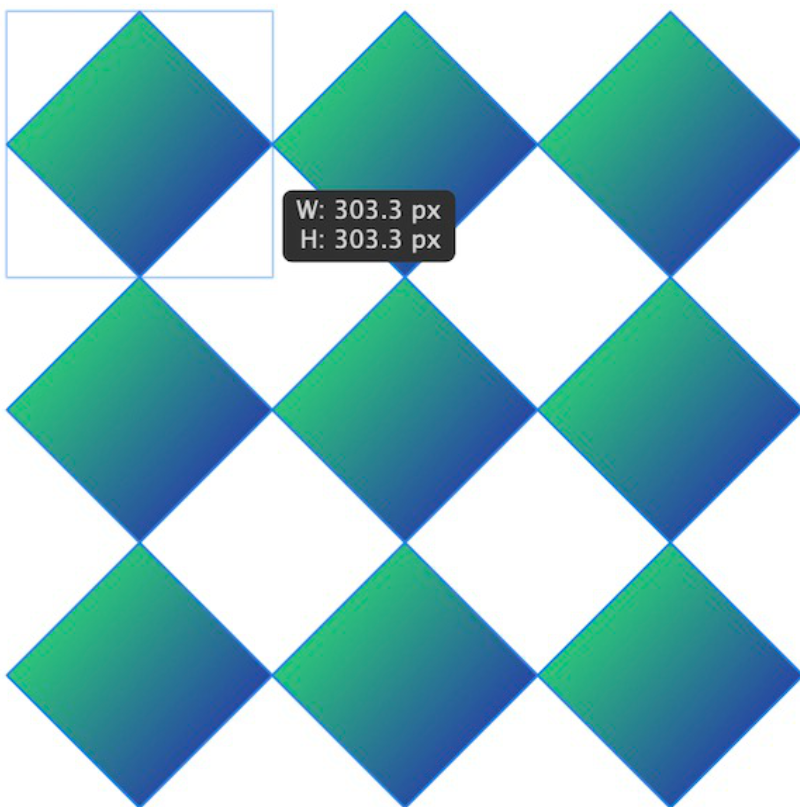
[Style Picker Tool](#)

# Quick Grids

While drawing a shape or text frame, you can tell Affinity to repeat the object in a grid and control the spacing between the grid's columns and rows.

For example, you might want to draw:

- a repeating geometric pattern.
- a series of bars on a chart.
- table-like cells that can later be independently transformed and styled, such as for a wall planner.



*A repeating geometric pattern drawn using the Diamond Tool.*

Each object is created on a separate layer. Their order from top to bottom on the layer stack corresponds to columns from left to right and rows from top to bottom.

Each object can be transformed and styled independently or together in a multiple selection.

💡 After drawing a grid, you can use [power duplicate](#) to add more columns and rows at a later time.

## ▼ To draw a grid of repeated objects:

1. Using a shape tool, picture frame tool, or the Frame Text Tool, begin drawing an object on a page.
2. Press the right/left arrow key to add/remove columns of the object, respectively.
3. Press the down/up arrow key to add/remove rows of the object to the grid, respectively.
4. (Optional) Hold the right or down arrow key to increase the spacing between columns or rows, respectively. (Conversely, use the left and up arrow keys to decrease spacing.)
5. (Optional) Hold the Shift key and press the right and down arrow keys to adjust the spacing between columns or rows, respectively, by 10x the usual increment. (Conversely, press the left and up arrow keys to decrease spacing by the same amount.)
6. Release to finish drawing the object and the grid.

 The change in spacing when performing steps 4 and 5 is determined by the values of **Nudge Distance** and **Modifier Nudge Distance**, respectively, in **Tools** settings.

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## SEE ALSO:

[Transforming objects](#)

[Duplicating objects](#)

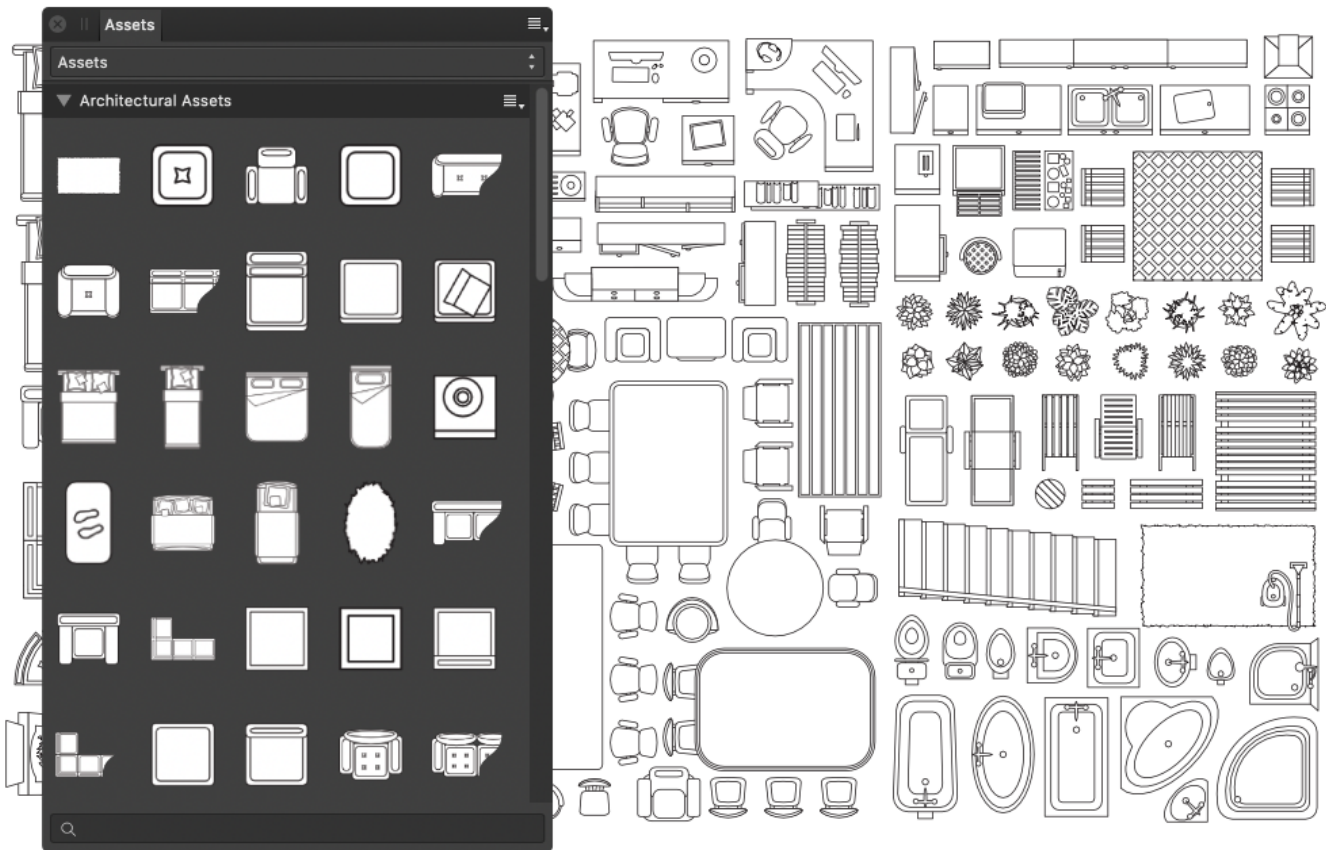
[Aligning objects](#)

[Grouping objects](#)

[Styles](#)

# Using assets

Assets are stored design elements which can be accessed from any document you have open.



## Working with assets

Assets are created from objects or groups of objects. Once selected on the page, these objects and groups can be added to a subcategory (in the displayed category) within the [Assets panel](#). When a new assets category is created, this creates a subcategory for you, ready to drag objects to.

An asset can be quickly added to a document by simply dragging its thumbnail from the Assets panel onto the page or an artboard.

 If a **Symbol** is added to the **Assets** panel it will not longer be associated with the Symbol in the **Symbols** panel. However, the asset will remember it's a Symbol. If it's added to a page or an artboard, it will also appear in the Symbols panel.

 Dragging an asset from the panel onto the title bar opens it as a separate document.

## Organizing assets

Categories can be created at any time to help you organize your assets. They are then listed in the pop-up menu at the top of the Assets panel. Each category can accommodate an unlimited number of subcategories.

Subcategories and assets by default are sorted by the time they were added. They can both be sorted by name however, if preferred.

 Assets cannot exist directly in categories, they must reside in subcategories. This is why categories are always created with a default Assets subcategory.

Assets in the panel can be displayed as thumbnails in a grid (default) or as a named list. Tooltips display the name of an asset.

## Sharing assets with collaborators

You can share assets with collaborators who are using Affinity Designer, by exporting and importing asset categories.

 The Assets panel is hidden by default. It can be switched on via the **Window** menu when working in Designer or Pixel Persona.

### ▼ To create a new assets category:

1. On the **Assets** panel, click Panel Preferences and choose **Create New Category**.
2. On the dialog, give the category a name, e.g. MyAssets.

 From Panel Preferences, you can also **delete** and **rename** the selected category.

### ▼ To create a new assets subcategory:

- On the **Assets** panel, click Panel Preferences and choose **Create Subcategory**.

 From the subcategory's options menu, you can **rename** and **delete** the selected subcategory.

## ▼ To reorder a subcategory:

Do one of the following:

- On the **Assets** panel, click Panel Preferences and choose **Move Up/ Move Up** depending on where you wish your subcategory to appear.
- Drag a subcategory name and place it where required vs other entries in the list.

## ▼ To create an asset:

1. Select one or more objects or groups on the page.
2. Do one of the following:
  - Drag the selection into the **Assets** panel (the cursor will change to show a plus icon) and release when you see a vertical insertion point or highlight.
  - On the **Assets** panel, click a subcategory's options menu and select **Add from Selection**.

Each item (object or group) in the selection is converted to a separate asset and placed in the subcategory with a default name.

 If you want a selection of objects to be added as a single asset, they must be grouped first.

## ▼ To add an asset to the page or an artboard:

- Do one of the following, from the **Assets** panel:
  - Drag an asset's thumbnail directly onto the page or an artboard.
  - Double-clicking on an asset's thumbnail will load the assets for placement by dragging out across the page or artboard.

 If an asset has constraint properties and you wish to activate these properties on placement, hold down the **Ctrl** key when you drag out the asset.

## ▼ To rename an asset:

1. On the **Assets** panel, **Right**-click an asset thumbnail and select **Rename Asset**.
2. In the dialog, type a new name for the asset and click **OK**.

## ▼ To delete an asset from the Assets panel:

- On the **Assets** panel, **Right**-click an asset thumbnail and select **Delete Asset**.



# Symbols

A symbol is an intelligent object that can be placed repeatedly in your document. Editing any one of these symbols on the page will automatically and instantly update all instances of that symbol.



*The glowing button outline is a symbol. When the shape of the button is modified on just one instance, they all change simultaneously.*

## About symbols

Symbols offer a highly efficient way of working, suitable for 'repeating' elements of design that are liable to change, e.g. logos, branding, and buttons. By avoiding having to edit the same elements multiple times, a symbol can be edited just once with all instances of that symbol updated automatically, even across multiple artboards. You also have the option to edit any symbol instance independently of others.

Adjustments and vector warps can be symbolized as well as drawn objects; the former when applied to a symbolized object or made directly from an independent adjustment layer.

## Linking

Symbol links are automatically made when creating multiple instances of a symbol. This linkage is fundamental to symbol functionality and, by default, allows changes to symbols to be reflected across all instances.

## Synchronizing

Synchronization allows editing across all symbols, while unsynchronization means all future editing is restricted to the current object and no longer affects the other symbol instances, until synchronization is enabled again.

If a symbol instance no longer needs to be a symbol, it can be detached (made into a standard object) without affecting synchronization. If all symbol instances no longer need to be symbols, you can revert them all back to standard objects.

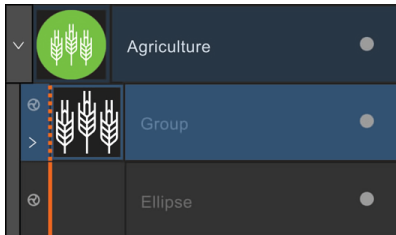
## Editing

You can perform any edit to symbols just as you would to a standard object. You can:

- Reshape, change stroke/fills, and add effects/adjustments. Note that global colors can also be used to change color across object independently of symbols.
- Add new 'non-symbol' objects to the symbol by dragging into the symbol group in the Layers panel.

 A key feature of symbols is that you can edit object attributes independently of each other—this means that, when unsynchronized, a specific attribute (dimension, fill, effect, font, etc.) can be edited while the remaining attributes will still retain symbols functionality.

As a useful visual aid, symbols are indicated by an vertical orange bar on their layer entries in the Layers panel. If a symbolized object has been edited when unsynchronized a dashed orange bar is shown instead.



Layers showing symbol indicators.

 The Symbols panel is hidden by default. It can be switched on via the **Window** menu when working in Designer or Pixel Persona.

### ▼ To create a symbol:

1. Select one or more objects or groups on the page or via the **Layers** panel.
2. Do one of the following:
  -  On the **Symbols** panel, click **Create**.
  - On the **Layer** menu, select **Create Symbol**.

 You can create a symbol from an object present in an existing symbol.

### ▼ To create symbol instances:

Do one of the following:

- On the **Symbols** panel, drag a chosen symbol onto the page.
- Duplicate an existing 'on page' symbol already present on the page.

Once there are multiple instances on your page, symbol linkage allows synchronization to occur across objects.

### ▼ To edit a symbol instance:

- On the **Layers** panel, expand a chosen Symbol entry, then edit the objects within.

 When a symbol that comprises multiple objects is used to create symbol instances on the page, it groups the objects by default. As a result, you have to edit the objects within to affect change across all symbol instances.

### ▼ To disable synchronization:

- On the **Symbols** panel, click **Sync** to disable so any object can be independently edited. When enabled again, editing is synchronized across all symbol instances.

#### ▼ To detach objects from symbols:

1. Select a symbol on the page or via the **Layers** panel.
2. On the **Symbols** panel, click **Detach**.

Detaching reverts a symbol back to a standard object while keeping synchronization enabled.

#### ▼ To delete a symbol:

- On the Symbols panel, **Right-click** the symbol and select **Delete Symbol**.

All symbol instances will revert to standard objects.

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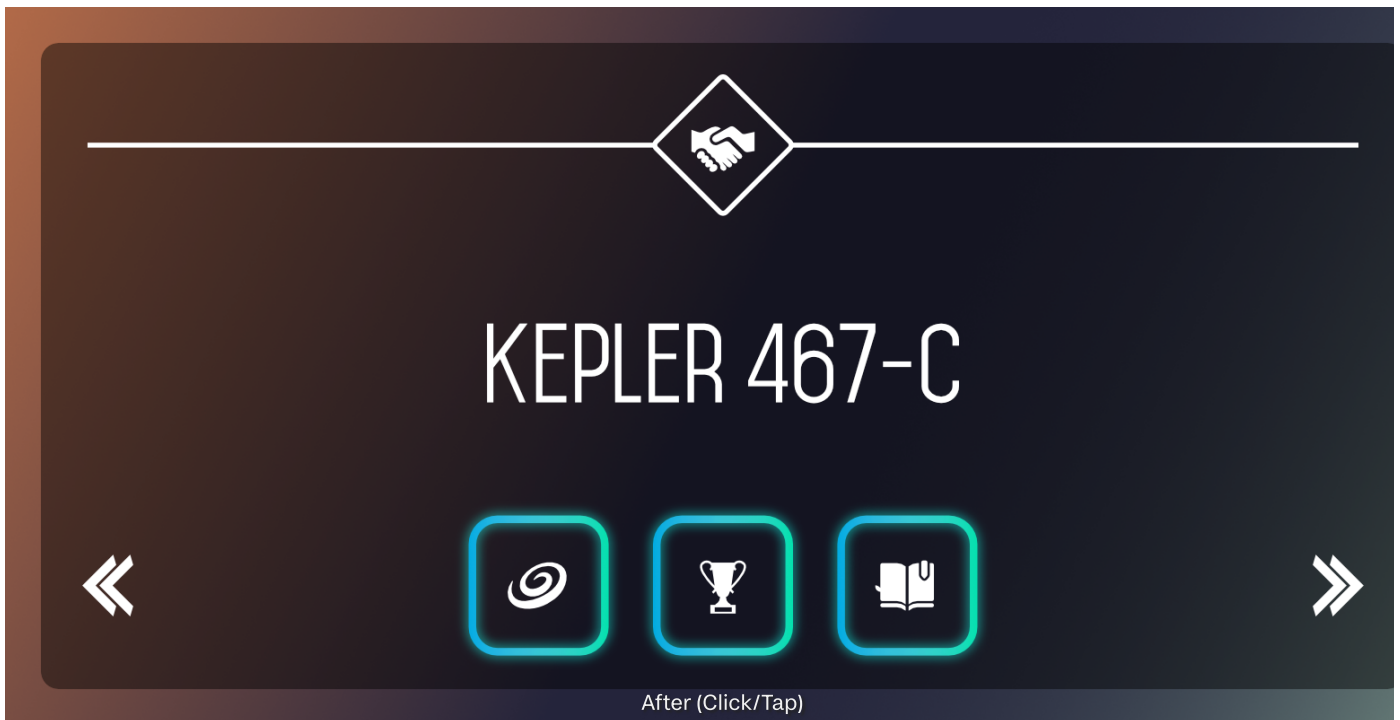
## SEE ALSO:

[Symbols panel](#)

[About layers](#)

# Symbols

A symbol is an intelligent object that can be placed repeatedly in your document. Editing any one of these symbols on the page will automatically and instantly update all instances of that symbol.



*The glowing button outline is a symbol. When the shape of the button is modified on just one instance, they all change simultaneously.*

## About symbols

Symbols offer a highly efficient way of working, suitable for 'repeating' elements of design that are liable to change, e.g. logos, branding, and buttons. By avoiding having to edit the same elements multiple times, a symbol can be edited just once with all instances of that symbol updated automatically, even across multiple artboards. You also have the option to edit any symbol instance independently of others.

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## Linking

Symbol links are automatically made when creating multiple instances of a symbol. This linkage is fundamental to symbol functionality and, by default, allows changes to symbols to be reflected across all instances.

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## Editing

# Layer states

**Layer states**, or simply **states**, allow you to instantly set the visibility and layer effects of multiple layers.



Before

Before and after a query applied: German and English version visibility.

There are two types of state:

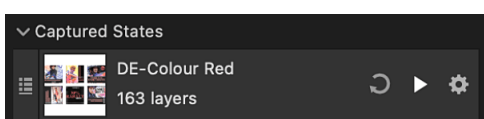
- A captured **state** captures the visibility of and layer effects applied to layers at the time the state is added to a document.
- A **query** specifies criteria—any combination of a layer's tag color, type, name and lock status—that determine the visibility of layers. For example, you may want to hide all layers that have a tag color of red and show all other layers.

States of each type can be given a name.

With several states or queries added to the **States** panel, you can quickly compare different design choices for your document, such as alternative masks, adjustments, live filters and even entirely different layer content.

## Understanding state and query entries

Entries on the States panel for each type of state provide different information about how they will affect your document's layers.

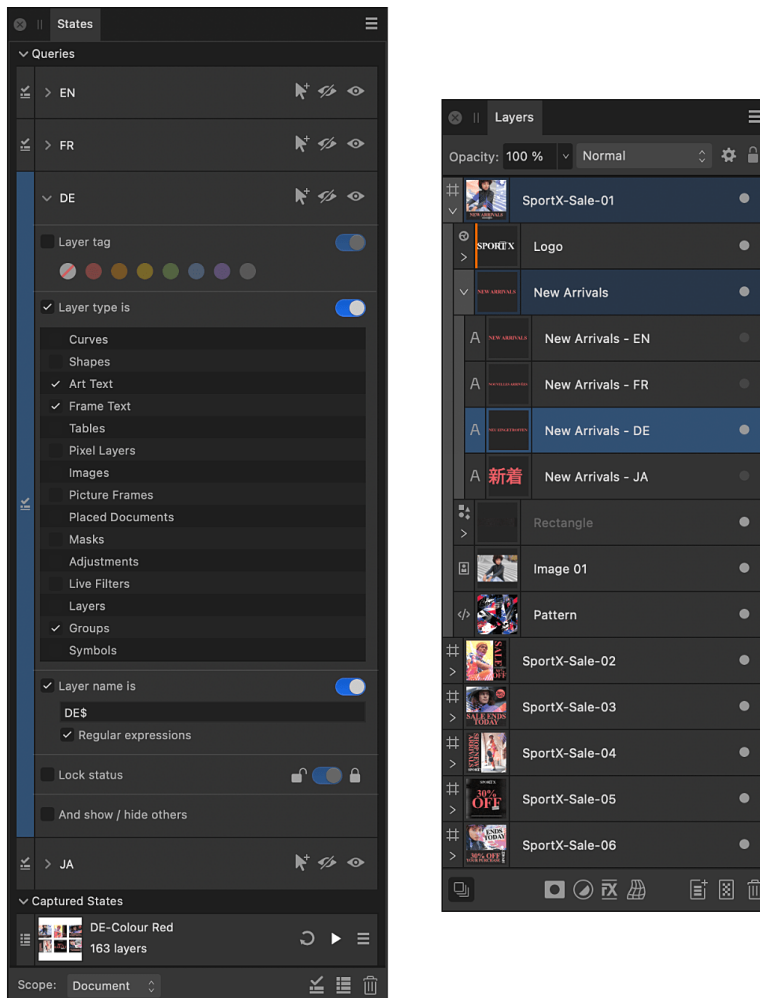




A captured state example.

Each state entry displays:

- A thumbnail representation of the state.
- The state's name.
- The number of layers for which information is captured in the state.



States and Layers panels for the query example: before and after images at the top of the page.

Each query entry displays the query's name, and specifies the criteria that must all be met in order to set your chosen layer visibility. You can specify any combination of the available attributes. Unselected attributes are ignored.

## Example scenarios

The application of states and queries can be used in a number of professional scenarios. Apart from language content previews above, more could include:

- Switching the visibility of an underlying image on and off while tracing; particularly useful when learning how to draw.
- Preparing a number of versions of mock-up designs for promotional campaigns.
- Presenting variations of content layout options on artboards.



Find and replace can locate document text that matches a pattern. See [Regular expressions](#) for more information. Detailed information about the capabilities of regular expressions is available on the Web.

## Controlling the scope of affected layers

When adding or updating a state or applying a state or a query, use the **Scope** setting to determine how broadly information is captured from or affects the current visibility of your document's layers, respectively.

The scope can be the whole document, the current selection on the **Layers** panel, or an individual spread—useful when editing certain kinds of document, such as .afpub

This allows you to focus your use of states on a specific portion of your work. For example, layers whose tag color is orange but only if they are nested within a selected layer.

### ▼ To add a state:

1. On the **Layers** panel, set the visibility of your document's layers as you want them to be captured.
2. On the **States** panel, set the **Scope** of layers whose visibility and layer effects you wish to capture to either **Document**, **Spread** or **Selection**.
3. (Optional) If the selected scope is either:
  - Spread—use the page navigation bar, at the bottom left of the workspace when editing a suitable document type, to navigate to the required spread.
  - Selection—on the Layers panel, select the layers whose visibility you want to capture.
4. Click **Add new captured state**.

 if artboards are in place, the **Spread** option for **Scope** (second point above) will reflect that and display **Artboard** instead.

### ▼ To add a query:

1. On the **States** panel, select **Add new query**.
2. On the query's entry:
  - Select only the attributes (**Layer tag**, **Layer type**, **Layer name** and **Lock status**) that you want to include as criteria.
  - For each selected attribute, specify the values that layers must match.
  - (Optional) Select **And show / hide others** if you wish to set the visibility of non-matching layers to the opposite of matching layers when the query is applied.

### ▼ To apply a state:

- (Optional) On the **Layers** panel, select the layers whose visibility you wish to affect.
- On the **States** panel:
  - Select the **Scope** for layers you wish to affect.
  - Click **Apply** on the state you wish to apply.

### ▼ To apply a query:

On the **States** panel:

1. Select the **Scope** for layers you wish to affect.
2. On the query you wish to apply:
  1. (Optional) Select or deselect **And show / hide others** according to whether you wish to affect non-matching layers.
  2. On the query you wish to apply, click **Hide** or **Show**.

### ▼ To set whether a state's captured visibility/layer effects will be applied:

- On the **States** panel, click the state's options menu and do the following:

1. Select **Visibility changes** to allow layer visibility captured in the state to be applied, or deselect it to ignore captured layer visibility.
2. Select **Effects changes** to allow layer effects captured in the state to be applied, or deselect it to ignore captured layer effects.

▼  **To update a state:**

1. (Optional) On the **Layers** panel, select the layers you wish to include in the updated state. (Layers that were not captured when the state was added will be ignored even if they are selected.)
2. On the **States** panel:
  1. Select the **Scope** of layers you wish to include in the updated state.
  2. Click **Update** on the state's entry.

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## SEE ALSO:

[States panel](#)

[About layers](#)

[Layers panel](#)

[Regular expressions](#)



# Layer states

**Layer states**, or simply **states**, allow you to instantly set the visibility and layer effects of multiple layers.



After (Click/Tap)

Before and after a query applied: German and English version visibility.

There are two types of state:

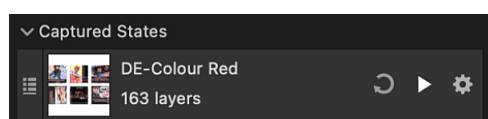
- A captured **state** captures the visibility of and layer effects applied to layers at the time the state is added to a document.
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States of each type can be given a name.

With several states or queries added to the **States** panel, you can quickly compare different design choices for your document, such as alternative masks, adjustments, live filters and even entirely different layer content.

## Understanding state and query entries

Entries on the States panel for each type of state provide different information about how they will affect your document's layers.



# Object defaults

When you create new objects, their appearance is initially determined by the default settings for the particular object you are creating.

These defaults can be changed in the current document, saved globally for future documents or returned to factory settings at any time. Synchronizing defaults lets you base a new default on the currently selected object, with the option to save the defaults or revert to saved defaults if needed.

 Object defaults are stored separately for stroke and fill attributes, artistic text attributes, and frame text attributes.

## ▼ To synchronize defaults to current selection:

1. Select an object with the attributes you wish to save as default settings.
2. On the Toolbar, select **Synchronise defaults from selection**.

Synchronized defaults override saved defaults for this document only. This is a great way to work with a set of defaults temporarily for a single document without having to save them.

## ▼ To save defaults:

- From the **Edit** menu, select **Defaults**, then **Save**.

The defaults used for this document become the global defaults for all future documents.

## ▼ To revert synchronized defaults back to saved defaults:

- On the Toolbar, select **Revert defaults**.

If an object is currently selected, its attributes revert to the default settings.

## ▼ To reset defaults to factory settings:

- From the **Edit** menu, select **Defaults**, then **Factory Reset**.

If an object is currently selected, its attributes revert to the default settings.

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## SEE ALSO:

[Toolbar](#)